# PARANORMAL UNDERGROUND®

Volume 10 | Issue 4

April 2017

## CRYPTOZOOLOGIST
Linda S. Godfrey

## A *Haunting* in Durhamville

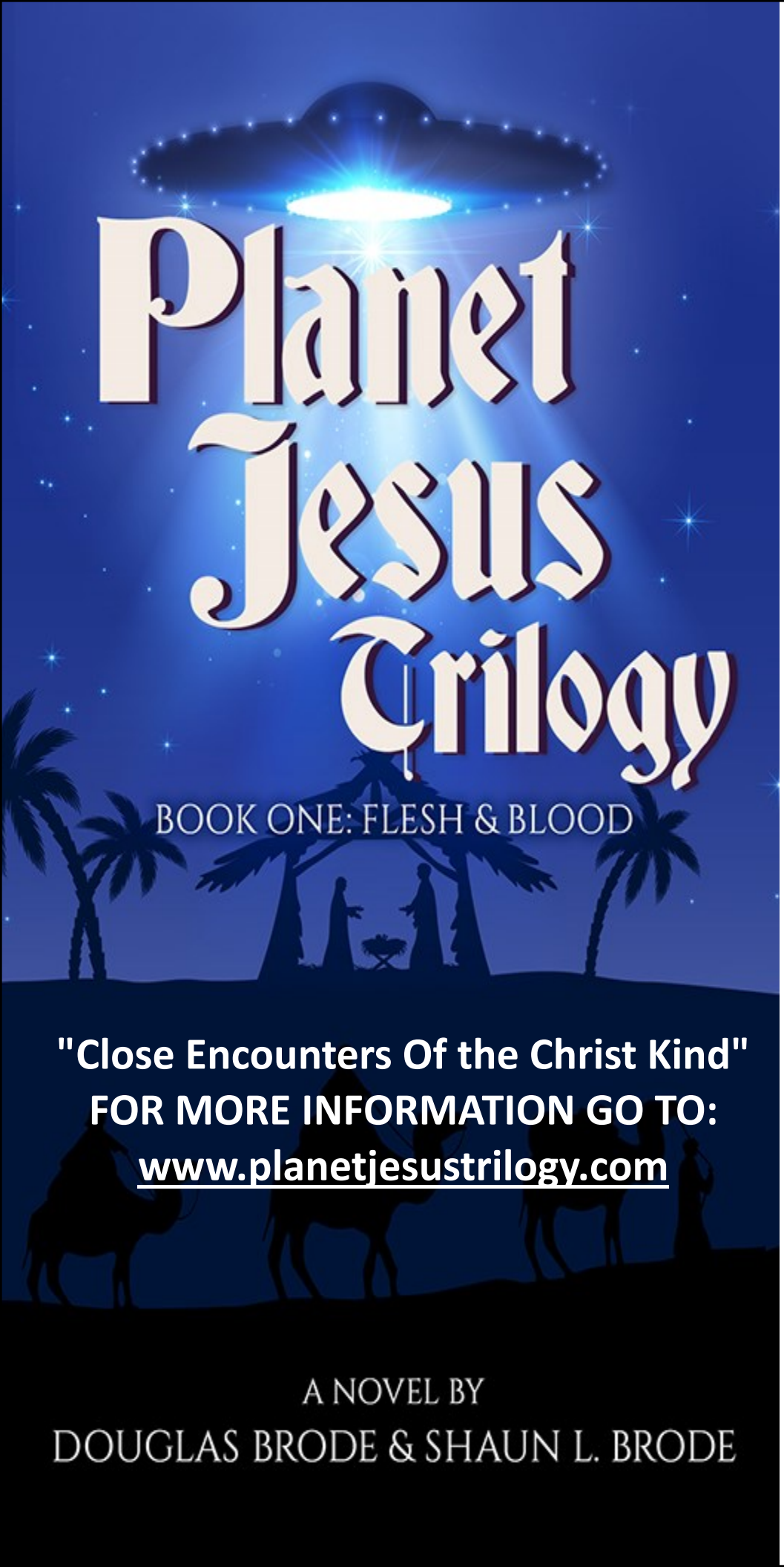
## HEAVEN & HELL:
A Destination or State of Spirit?

## WHAT IS POPPET MAGIC?

## HEALING
THE NEW AGE WAY

**ALSO INSIDE:**

- Ghosts of War: 8 Haunted War Memorials
- Was Inventor Nikola Tesla a UFO Contactee?
- Encountering Cryptids on an Empathic Level
- Flying Horror of New Guinea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Writing and witchcraft have always remained close to Winter's heart, feeling both require a profound understanding of one's self and environment. When she's not exploring the macabre and bizarre, Winter enjoys reading tarot, as well as writing poetry and short stories. All of her work can be viewed on her Website.

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Sean has written or contributed to more than 30 books for Global Communications and Inner Light Publications, all of which are available from Amazon.com. His books include *The Heretic's UFO Guidebook*, which analyzes a selection of Gnostic Christian writings and their relationship to the UFO phenomenon, and *Signs and Symbols of the Second Coming*, in which he interviews several religious and paranormal experts about how prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ may be fulfilled.

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### ALAN D.D.

Alan is a writer of paranormal romances and other works. In his books, he mixes human relationships with plots involving the supernatural world and magic. Alan is a blogger and a journalist. "I try to be the best mess I can be and help others to do the same, because there will never be enough freaks in this world."

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Her favorite writers are Virginia Woolf, Thomas Bernhard, Penelope Mortimer, and J.D. Salinger. Other passions include horror movies, *The Addams Family*, *Dateline NBC*, Alfred Hitchcock, the paranormal, and cemeteries.

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As an investigator and evidence analyst with Spectral Tech, Bob and the team try to help their clients find answers while helping to educate them about the paranormal in the process.

As a special projects manager primarily involved in process engineering, and because documentation and analysis is paramount to serious investigations, Bob was drawn to take more than a passing interest and become actively involved in the study of different paranormal phenomena. He has a bachelor's degree in applied organizational management and a bachelor's in metaphysical science from the University of Metaphysics. Bob is also an ordained minister/metaphysical practitioner with the International Metaphysical Ministry.

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Karen is a psychic medium and author. Her published paranormal books include *Avalanche of Spirits: The Ghosts of Wellington*, *Dancing With the Afterlife*, and *Pioneer Spirits: Investigating the Haunted Lewis County Historical Museum*.

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Willie has appeared on A&E's *Cursed: The Bell Witch* and CMTs *Most Shocking Ghosts*. He also hosted his own public access show in Louisville, Kentucky, for 12 years, called *Spiritual Gifts and Wonders*. He also has his own group of sensitives, called Soul Warriors, who are based all over the US.

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Cheryl's previous magazine experience includes roles as senior and managing editor for several business publications.

https://paranormalunderground.net/

### JILL MARIE MORRIS

Jill is the author of *207: A Personal Account of Love Paranormal Phenomenon and Demonic Possession* (2011) and *Saints Sinners & Sacred Ground* (2013). She is also a psychic medium who uses her gifts to assist with cold cases and investigations. She does not believe in charging for readings. Her abilities have led to the discovery of two documented DNA matches to living ancestors in one family.

In addition to her work in the paranormal field, Jill is a personal chef and freelance interior decorator. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, history, art, music, and architecture.

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Michelle is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author writing in many fiction genres, including the Dragon-Shifter series *Dragon Lords* and *Captured by a Dragon-Shifter* and the mischievously magical *Warlocks MacGregor*. A skeptical believer, she has a fascination with anything paranormal.

Michelle loves to travel and try new things, whether it's a paranormal investigation of an old Vaudeville theater or climbing Mayan temples in Belize. She has a BGS in history/business with an English minor and a photography degree. She is the co-owner of www.TheRavenBooks.com.

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### MATT SWEENEY

Matt is currently unemployed, is vision impaired, and has worked and studied in various areas of employment. He loves writing and contributes weekly to *The Paranormal Guide* with articles on varied subjects, but mainly discusses cryptozoology and UFOs. He shares his articles on his own Facebook page, "Marvels and the Macabre With Matty."

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Chad has investigated with East Tennessee Paranormal Research Society and counts Waverly Hills Sanatorium, the Villisca Axe Murder House, Bobby Mackey's Music World, the Queen Mary, Queen Anne Hotel, Hotel Alex Johnson, and private residences among his investigations.

https://paranormalunderground.net/ ◆

*Do you have a dream you would like to have interpreted in Paranormal Underground magazine? Email editor@paranormalunderground.net with a detailed description of your dream, and we will interpret it for you.*

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# Life on Other Planets

Is there life on other planets? Recent findings by NASA scientists seem to indicate that the answer is yes. The latest information gathered by the Cassini spacecraft on one of Saturn's moons, Enceladus, has brought to light the forces at work beneath the surface. It was while flying through plumes of gas that emit from the surface of Enceladus that Cassini detected significant amounts of molecular hydrogen.

The discovery of molecular hydrogen indicates that the surface of the moon's ocean floor could contain hydrothermal vents, much like here on Earth. This is significant because the hydrothermal vents on our own planet are home to multitudes of living microbes, with the organisms feeding off of the chemical reactions created from the interaction between the surrounding seawater and the magma from underwater volcanoes. It just goes to show that life thrives in the weirdest places.

**Chad Wilson, Publisher**

It makes you wonder how versatile life is. It also begs the question, could there be other forms of intelligent life, other than what we already know of, living beside us on this planet? If life can thrive in what we previously thought as an uninhabited planet, how much more likely is it that life here on Earth is much more diverse than we thought?

Some would argue the question, if there is other life on our planet, wouldn't we know about it? For one, the life form could live where we least expect it to. Namely, beneath large bodies of water, within the Earth itself, or in other out-of-the-way places that humans seldom visit. Some areas that come to mind include the many purported underground and underwater bases said to be occupied by otherworldly beings.

In 1970, John Keel published the book, *Operation Trojan Horse*. Within its pages, the journalist talked about UFO sightings dating back to the time before the current age of sightings. According to Keel, over the centuries, a force hostile to humanity has occupied this Earth side-by-side with us. To disguise their presence, the ultraterrestials, as Keel called them, manipulate our senses to keep hidden. This is usually in the form of aerial phenomena, such as fairies at first, then airships later on, and alien spacecraft today. All the while we focus on the signs in the sky, never thinking to check around us to see if our visitors are actually living on this planet with us.

Who is to say that civilizations from our planet's past did not progress to the point that they developed high-tech or even seemingly magical societies and devices? With the human propensity to destroy what they do not understand, can you blame advanced cultures from not wanting to reveal themselves? One civilization that comes to mind includes the ancient civilization that existed in India, as detailed in the Vedic Texts, that flew wondrous devices, called Viminas, across the skies of our planet.

And, if the flood myths present in the history of almost every culture on Earth are any indication, civilization on this planet flourished before being destroyed in that great calamity. This also means there could be a kernel of truth in the stories about lost Atlantis, Lemuria, Mu, and other civilizations lost beneath the waves long ago. What it leads me to believe is that our planet has a long and storied history unknown to modern science. I feel like we are not the first here, nor do I believe we will be the last.

Another possibility is that we share our planet with visitors from other dimensions. Scientists have long posited that our own dimension exists alongside other dimensions, some quite like our own and some not so similar. What if, occasionally, beings from these other dimensions become trapped, or even decide to visit or move to our own dimension? How would we know if they were here, especially if they lived in hidden places or there were so few of them that we didn't even notice they were here in the first place?

Another possibility is that extraterrestrials from the stars have decided to call our planet home. This could be due to a myriad of reasons, including their own planet being destroyed, a desire to conquer, or maybe the distances involved in travel are so far that coming to Earth is a one-way trip.

I think that life exists wherever it can gain a foothold. It is tenacious, and once it has a hold, it doesn't want to let go. I also think that while we might think we are the predominant species on this world, we are far from alone.◆

**April 29–May 6**
SpiriCruise III: The Ghostly Gallivant
Cruising from Orlando, Florida, on the Carnival Magic
http://www.spiricruise.com/

**May 5–7**
Pennsylvania Bigfoot Camping Adventure
Benner's Meadow Run Camping & Cabins
Farmington, Pennsylvania
http://www.pabigfootcampingadventure.com/

**May 5–8**
A Spiritual Retreat
Mount Washington Hotel
Bretton Woods, New Hampshire
http://www.strange-escapes.com/events/a-spiritual-retreat-to-the-mount-washington-hotel-may-5th-8th-2017/

**May 12–14**
Provincetown Paracon
Provincetown Inn
Provincetown, Massachusetts
https://provincetownparacon.com/

**May 13**
New Jersey Paraunity Expo
Woodbridge High School
Woodbridge, New Jersey
http://www.newjerseyparaunityexpo.com/

**May 18–21**
McMenamins UFO Festival
Hotel Oregon
McMinnville, Oregon
http://ufofest.com/

**May 19–20**
Enigmacons
St. Albans Sanatorium
Radford, Virginia
http://www.enigmacons.com/home.html

**May 19–21**
A Haunting in the Desert
2nd and Safford Street
Tombstone, Arizona
http://www.beelieveparanormal.com/events-.html

**May 19–21**
Mad Monster Arizona
We-Ko-Pa Resort
Scottsdale/Fountain Hills, Arizona
http://madmonster.com/events/arizona2017/

**May 19–22**
Contact in the Desert
Joshua Tree Retreat Center
Joshua Tree, California
http://contactinthedesert.com/

**May 20**
Ohio Bigfoot Conference
Salt Fork State Park Lodge and Conference Center
Lore City, Ohio
http://ohiobigfootconference.org/

**May 25–June 2**
"Witching You Were Here" — A Paranormal Cruise from Salem to Bermuda
http://www.strange-escapes.com/events/witching-you-were-here-a-paranormal-cruise-from-salem-to-bermuda-may-25th-2017-june-2nd-2017/

**May 26–28**
Alien Expo
Sheraton Dallas Hotel and Convention Center
Dallas, Texas
http://www.alienexpodallas.com/

E-mail your paranormal event to editor@paranormalunderground.net.◆

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Linda Godfrey at her Wisconsin home
(Photo by Nathan Godfrey)

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# Best Paranormal *Evidence*

In this month's "Paranormal Insider" column, we've asked our insiders: "What is the most impressive piece of paranormal evidence you've ever captured?" Here's what they had to say ...

* * * * *

"Einstein once said, 'All knowledge of reality starts with experience and ends with it.' That being said, the best evidence I've ever captured was my own personal experience. My husband's friend Rich, who was killed in the World Trade Center Attacks of 9/11, came to me in a vivid dream with a message for his wife.

"I had never met Rich, yet I knew it was him. His message was later validated by his family. The experience was life changing and solidified my belief in the afterlife."

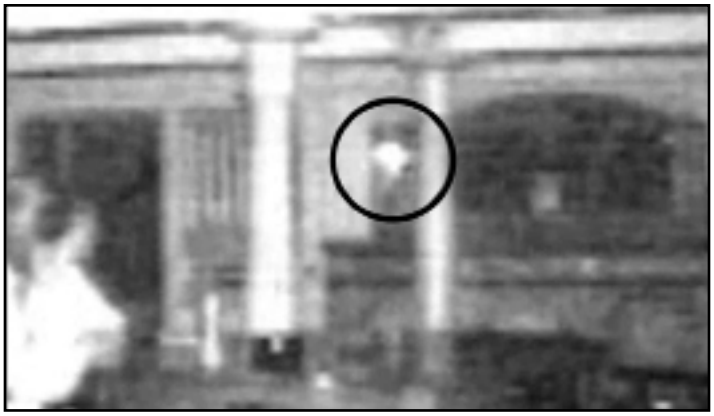
— Josie Varga, author of *A Call From Heaven: Personal Accounts of Deathbed Visits, Angelic Visions, and Crossing to the Other Side*

"I don't usually get much in the traditional way of evidence — then I tend to be a bit off traditional anyway! Usually the entities say: "Why should we go to all that work when you can see and hear us?

"But I think the biggest proof event of what I do could be my first time at Wellington. I walked around the parking lot and said what happened where. All signs of the buildings are gone, but those there who had researched the area and knew what was were said I was right every time. Then, down where the train rested, I got the names and occupations of people killed. I didn't pick up everyone on her list, but what I did pick up fit exactly with the list in Karen Frazier's book."

— William Becker, Paranormal Insights

"To date, it is a toss-up between an EVP where an entity provided their full name and a picture that captured an entity interacting with a digital recorder and leaving a message saying that they were trying to manifest.



**The SPIRITS of New England team captured the above light anomaly on video during an investigation of the *USS Constitution* in Charlestown, Massachusetts.**

"Both the picture and EVP are posted on our Website evidence page at spectraltech.org."

— Bob Fountain, Spectral Tech

"While my team and I have captured many interesting and impressive pieces of paranormal evidence over the years, I am actually torn between two pieces as our absolute most impressive. Interestingly enough, both were captured during our investigation of the US Navy ship the *USS Constitution* in Charlestown, Massachusetts.

"If I have to choose just one, though, I would say it is a piece of DVR video evidence we captured in the officer's quarters on the birthing deck of the ship. In the footage, you can see our investigator Sarah Campbell sitting at a table. She looks up for a moment, and then just beyond where she is seated you see this strange light anomaly suddenly appear in mid air and begin to spiral upward toward the ceiling. It grows in size as it spirals upward, and then it suddenly collapses in on itself and is gone.

"Even more interesting is as you watch the footage

again, you will notice a reflection of this light in the edge of the tabletop Sarah is sitting at. In the footage, Sarah has no reaction to it, and when she watched the video herself she was shocked, because she never saw anything the whole hour she spent in that room by herself. This indicates the anomaly was only visible in the IR spectrum of light of the DVR camera.

"The actual video footage is also available to view on our team's Website at http://spiritsofnewengland.org."

— Jack Kenna, SPIRITS of New England

"In my opinion, every piece of paranormal evidence has its own story to tell. However, there are certain ones that stand out and have that element of surprise. The San Diego Paranormal Research Society has been privately researching the Rancho Buena Vista Adobe since 2011. This also includes its monthly 'Spirits of the Adobe' tours, which act as a fundraiser event for the Friends of the Adobe.

"Ali Schreiber and I have consistently captured profound and historically relevant data in the form of ITC from various areas of the Adobe. We have been able to historically and factually verify certain pieces of ghostly evidence, which, in our opinion, serve as the Holy Grail of spiritual phenomena. Here are some examples:

"1. Native Americans helped build the nearby San Luis Rey Mission, as well as portions of the Rancho Buena Vista Adobe. About two years ago, I asked one of its resident energies, 'Juan, are you still friends with the Indians?' Via our spirit box, we received a clear response of 'Still am.'

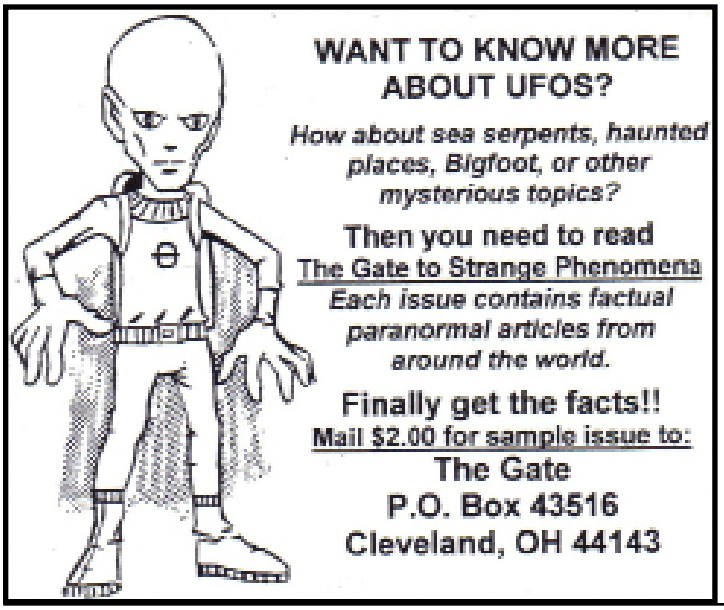
"2. The Couts family has a lot of history with both the Rancho Buena Vista Adobe and the Rancho Guajome. The family's eldest son, Cave Couts Jr., used to keep his prized stallions inside the structure in order to avoid the fate of horse thieves. One night we asked, 'How many horses do you have?' We received a clear response of 'Two.' A few seconds later, Ali asked, 'Do you have any Appaloosas?' We also received a response of 'Three.'

"3. The Adobe has had various owners since its inception in 1845. As mentioned, one of its prominent families included the Couts. We have communicated with Ysidora Bandini de Couts, Cave Johnson Couts, Maria Antonia (eldest daughter), Cave Couts Jr. (eldest son), etc. We are now at the point where we can identify the vocal tones of these individuals.

"One example of this occurred when we asked if Maria Antonia was present with us one night — of which we received a definitive response of 'Yes.' She has come through for us on other occasions with an identical sound to her voice.

"These are just a few examples of the magnitude of data we are collecting from this legendary historic icon. It's a great feeling to piece together the historical puzzle of a location's past."

— Nicole Strickland, San Diego Paranormal Research Society ◆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# The Accidental Cryptozoologist

## Linda S. Godfrey

**By Cheryl Knight**

Researching and writing about the strange and unexplained is second nature to Linda S. Godfrey. She's done so for more than 25 years. Whether tracking down the Beast of Bray Road, researching local cemetery lore and ghost stories, or investigating unidentified creatures and UFOs, Linda has logged thousands of miles on her "weirdmobile," traveling the U.S. in search of paranormal evidence.

"People from around North and South America and even Europe and Australia have contacted me with reports of their encounters," Linda said. "Sometimes their stories describe Bigfoot, giant birds, or water monsters. There's a world o'weirdness out there!"

The author, investigator, and artist has written numerous books on strange creatures, bizarre phenomena, and eccentric people, including:

- *Monsters Among Us: An Exploration of Otherworldly Bigfoots, Wolfmen, Portals, Phantoms, and Odd Phenomena;*
- *American Monsters: A History of Monster Lore, Legends, and Sightings in America;*
- *The Beast of Bray Road: Tailing Wisconsin's Werewolf*;
- *Real Wolfmen: True Encounters in Modern America*; and
- *Haunted Wisconsin: Ghosts and Strange Phenomena of the Badger State.*

Linda appeared in, co-wrote and co-produced the History Channel's *MonsterQuest* episode "American Werewolf" and also appeared in the show's season 4 finale. She is a former award-winning newspaper reporter and art teacher and provides many illustrations for her own books.

"The fact that people keep seeing these things is what drives me to keep searching, investigating, speculating, and writing about them," explained Linda. "And after 25 years and 17 published books, I'm still tracking those unknown trails."

**Linda worked for 10 years as a reporter, columnist, and cartoonist for *The Week*, a county newspaper based in Delavan, Wisconsin. She lives in the Kettle Moraine area of Southeast Wisconsin with her husband and monster dog, Grendel.**

Linda recently talked with *Paranormal Underground* magazine about her vast experience researching and investigating the strange and unexplained.

* * * * *

**Q: Talk about your work in the paranormal field.**

**Linda:** I like to call myself the accidental cryptozoologist. This was not my intended life's plan, but somehow over the years I've become the author of published books on unknown creatures and strange or unexplained people and places. Much of it is based on my own field work and conclusions, with major input from a widespread and diverse population of eyewitnesses.

I only meant to write one such book, but to paraphrase famous film character Forrest Gump, "The paranormal is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're going to get." And in either case, it's hard to stop at just one.

Most of my writing and research in the world of the strange started with my investigation of a large, wolf-like animal that, for unknown reasons, ran on its hind legs. This was the creature I dubbed "The Beast of Bray Road" in a newspaper article that ran on New Year weekend in 1991-92 in the Walworth County publication *The Week*. The mystery remains unresolved to this day and was not a one-time, local event; there have been worldwide sightings of this strange canid dating far into the past, and most cannot be explained as animals known to present science. That realization meant that I had to spread my investigative wings beyond wolfish bipeds.

> **"I SAW A WHITE, FLOATING HUMAN TORSO AT THE HEAD OF A STAIRWAY THAT LED TO THE REPORTEDLY HAUNTED BASEMENT."**

That happened very naturally when, in the years 2005 to 2006, I was asked to coauthor and author *Weird Wisconsin* and *Weird Michigan* of the Barnes & Noble *Weird US* series, followed by sequels *Strange Wisconsin* and *Strange Michigan* (with the former Trails Media).

These books explored a wide swath of paranormal phenomena, including haunted places, unusual cemeteries and graveyard legends, UFOs, ghost lights, eccentric people, bizarre creatures, and visionary art. It was my job to personally explore every nook and cranny of Michigan and Wisconsin to dig for information and photograph whatever I could. This journey proved eye-opening, especially on two occasions when I witnessed apparitions at close range.

One of these unexpected sightings occurred in a historic building in downtown Sparta, Wisconsin, where I

**Linda first broke the story of the Beast of Bray Road when writing for as a small-town Wisconsin newspaper. Now, more than two decades later, she still receives one to three reports of strange creatures per week from around the world. Pictured above is Linda's original illustration of the Beast as published on December 31, 1991.**

saw a white, floating human torso at the head of a stairway that led to the reportedly haunted basement. The building, originally the site of a mill and then rebuilt as a livery and carriage stable, was serving as a specialty soap store when I visited to photograph one very weird feature of the building: Embedded in the basement wall was a beautiful 1878 tombstone dedicated to a young Norwegian woman named Christiane.

Was it truly some remnant of this lady's spirit that I saw floating in the hall that day? It's hard to say, but I found out later that the store owner's husband had also witnessed a floating, white form in that area more than once. Whatever or whomever the ghostly resident's true nature, it was also adept at whispering in the ears of soap-making employees in the basement or moving tables and chairs on the first floor and in the attic.

Local investigators have turned up no definitive answers, but townspeople and visitors alike, including a director of the Sparta Chamber of Commerce and yours truly, have witnessed the unusual activities. (More details may be found in *Weird Wisconsin, Your Travel Guide to Wisconsin's Local Legends and Best Kept Secrets.*)

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**Linda specializes in investigating unexplained creatures, including dogmen and Bigfoot. She loves getting out in the field to investigate, including trail hiking in forested areas and conducting nighttime stakeouts along roads and on private land.**

My other surprise sighting took place in the empty basement of a brick building erected in 1890 in Manistee, Michigan, by a German family named Baur. I learned about the haunted former saloon when I stopped at the town's historical museum one summer day in 2005 looking for oddities and received a tip from the resident historian. I assumed I would simply take the usual snapshots of the site of a local legend and be on my way, but again I was in for an amazing encounter.

The building's owner, Darlene Van de Weele, showed me around the offices and the original bar room before escorting me to the basement, the place's most active area. After standing quietly with Darlene in the darkness of the large cellar for a few minutes, I suddenly felt goose bumps and then observed a large, self-illuminated sphere with triangular "wings" hovering near the ceiling only seven or eight feet away from me.

Not believing my eyes, I blinked and looked away and then back again, and it was still there. As usually happens in these situations, the phenomenon faded just as I raised my camera and was gone by the time I clicked the shutter. I wanted to be gone from that place, too, and asked Darlene if we could please turn the lights back on.

She told me that she also saw an apparition as we stood there, but not the simple winged globe I described. Instead, she'd seen the full, ghostly figure of a young man known locally as "Basement Billy," a member of the original builder's family. Billy Baur died in 1895 and has been blamed, along with two other long-deceased Baurs, for various poltergeist incidents over the years. (This story is more fully discussed in *Weird Michigan, Your Travel Guide to Michigan's Local Legends and Best Kept Secrets.*)

The fact that the owner and I saw different forms at the same time in that basement raises interesting questions about the way human perception works. It also makes me wonder whether the human subconscious collaborates with unknown energies to fit our individual expectations.

These energies, according to some theories, may present themselves in other forms and often occur in clusters. I've noticed, over the years, that some sightings of dogmen and Bigfoot — especially when the creatures are observed multiple times in residential areas — may occur in tandem with reports of intense poltergeist activity, mystery lights, and other unexplained things not explained by present science. In my mind, that makes it hard to rule out the possibility that all of these phenomena may somehow be related.

**Q: What is your favorite paranormal topic to research/investigate?**

**Linda:** Unexplained creatures have become my specialty, although encounters with dogmen and Bigfoot don't necessarily involve anything overtly paranormal. In many cases, their behavior is uncanny and unusual but not otherworldly.

Canines can walk on their hind legs if motivated to do so. I do find it fascinating, however, that eyewitnesses also may report footprints that suddenly end in a field, weird lights, or creatures that seem to disappear on the spot. I also receive a fair number of reports from dogman or Bigfoot witnesses that may later find themselves plagued by furry window peepers, poltergeists, or apparitions inside their homes.

One family that lives on Bray Road very close to several sighting locations, for instance, told me they have long felt their home was haunted. Many witnesses are reluctant to include these details with their reports for fear of being mocked or disbelieved, but I'm always happy to hear the

"inconvenient truths" that sometimes occur in the course of an encounter. To me, it's confirmation that something worthy of study is happening.

**Q: What different types of locations have you investigated?**

**Linda:** I love getting out in the field whenever possible, especially trail-hiking in forested areas where there are reports of Sasquatch and upright canines. I've also conducted many nighttime stakeouts along roads and on private land.

I've driven through and observed "spook lanes"; examined haunted properties and landmarks, such as old prisons and hospitals; and visited numerous cemeteries and First Nation burial sites, as well as sacred places (Aztalan State Park near Lake Mills, Wisconsin, is a favorite) ... any place where unexplained events occur. I admit I haven't tried scuba diving for lake monsters yet, but it could still happen.

**Q: What equipment do you usually take with you on investigations?**

**Linda:** That depends heavily on the type of investigation, but my standard, simple go-bag includes a notebook, Trifield meter, ruler or measuring tape, small knife, paper envelopes and tweezers for specimen samples, dog or bear repellent spray, cameras, batteries, insect repellent, and a small audio recorder. I always like to have plaster cast makings in the trunk. I use a trail cam when appropriate and am considering investing in a dash cam.

All of these things, along with things I don't presently use, such as night vision goggles or drones, are great tools and do increase the odds of getting that elusive, non-blurry shot that ghost and cryptid hunters desire. But I don't think they necessarily increase the odds of a personal encounter.

On the several occasions when I've had sightings of creatures I believe were Bigfoot, I was simply out for a casual, unplanned walk with no equipment at all. I think there is something to be said for that approach. While basic hiking gear is always useful (as is dressing for terrain and weather), fancy technology is not always worth the weight it adds to your backpack or the money it subtracts from your wallet. I suggest that awareness of your surroundings and knowledge of the habitat are as important to your success as any gear. I firmly believe there is room and a need for both modes of exploration.

**Q: What methodologies do you use during investigations?**

**Linda:** Since my work covers such a wide range, I'm generally not tied into precise methodologies of any type, although I try to follow rules of collecting samples of hair, etc., that will help keep them uncontaminated. Not that I often find such things.

In certain cases, I'll confer with outdoor or wildlife experts or with electronic equipment experts to make sure I have proper knowledge and tools. It's also my personal preference to work with small groups when hiking. I think large "hunting" parties may deter or at least dampen whatever subject is being sought. The greater the number of people, the more noise and human odor will be evident to those wild creatures with their fantastic senses of smell and hearing.

And finally, I have found that conducting one's self in an alert but respectful manner seems to yield the best results in any case. The simple things really do count.

**Q: What cases will you remember the most and why?**

→

**An interesting branch assemblage some researchers associate with Bigfoot markers of various types, taken on a privately owned trail abutting Wisconsin's Kettle Moraine State Forest.**

**A recent illustration of a witness description of an upright, wolf-like creature seen in Central Michigan as drawn by Linda.**

**Linda:** As for most investigators, the cases I remember best will always be those where the subjects of the search actually show up! Probably the most shocking to my personal world view was the event on a sunny, windless day in summer 2012, when I witnessed a 35-foot-long, eight-inch-diameter, living oak tree branch being twisted and then torn off the main trunk on a tree only 150 feet away from me in two loud, splintering cracks before it fell and crashed 40 feet to the forest floor below.

This was no ordinary branch break. Whatever accomplished the Herculean feat of strength needed hands and long, strong arms attached to shoulders to grab and twist such a huge branch. That fact narrowed the field of suspects considerably. The only being I could imagine filling that bill was a large Bigfoot — one that was evidently upset with my presence. I left, but I returned half an hour later with a friend, Sandra Schwab, and her 21-year-old daughter, Natalie, to see if we could examine the branch for woodpecker holes or decay. There were no such indications. But we did get the best evidence of a Bigfoot's presence ... a direct sighting of one!

While Sandra and I were naturally looking the other way, Natalie, who until then had little to no interest in such things, glimpsed a beige-gray Bigfoot striding (her word) quickly into some dense, nearby underbrush. We all smelled its overwhelming, skunkish-moldy grass odor and heard its deep, booming growl. We also found fresh bark rubs on the branch that were shaped roughly like nine-inch mittens where the creature would have had to have grasped the limb in order to twist and tear it.

I did not sleep that night and can still hear and see that branch coming off the tree. That was when I understood the difference between intellectual acceptance and personal knowledge of such creatures.

My most recent experience of the shocking kind dates back to August 2015, when I had invited a colleague, radio host and researcher Sanjay Singhal, to come along with me and property owner Lee Hampel on a nighttime stakeout of Hampel's Wisconsin hay field. This field, which I detailed in *Monsters Among Us*, has proven to be a nexus of the strange. Animal carcass mutilations, unidentified tracks, and unexplained light phenomena have become the norm there rather than the exception over the past several years, and trail cameras have not been able to catch the perpetrators in the act.

After several hours spent sitting in Singhal's car, we finally noticed what at first resembled the headlight of a small plane flying across the field from us wobbling weirdly. It suddenly deviated from its path and headed straight for the car. We realized rather quickly it was no airplane after it stopped about 30 feet away from us, about 30 feet in the air. We all agreed it was a self-lit sphere about the size of a basketball.

I was just aiming my camera, jostling a bit for a clearer view from my backseat vantage point, when Singhal suddenly aimed a large, torch-like flashlight at the hovering globe. We all had the instant impression that the thing was not only aware of us, but seemed surprised at the sudden intrusion of the light beam. It then vanished in a way that Hampel, a retired math and physics teacher, described as "stuttering," and that looked to me as if it were

turning inward on itself. The three of us then shouted in great surprise and soon left after Singhal began to feel ill.

We still often discuss the incident between ourselves, and wonder what might have occurred had Singhal not followed his instinct to hit the sphere with the light. (More details and photos may be found in *Monsters Among Us*.)

**Q: What is the most compelling evidence of the paranormal that you have captured?**

**Linda:** While always remembering that evidence is not final proof, I believe that footprints resembling those of very large wolves walking only on hind legs — often in areas where wildlife officials declare there are no wolves — are probably the best evidence I've personally turned up. As most researchers will agree, hard evidence is difficult to come by in any area of the unexplained.

There have also been many detailed footprint casts showing certain traits attributed to Sasquatch collected by researchers worldwide, but they are not enough to convince skeptics the creatures exist. Standard scientific practice has declared even DNA samples that don't match any known animals useless as evidence, because there is no pre-existing database for comparison.

Photos and videos may be problematic, as well, because for some reason cryptids and paranormal phenomena almost never turn out sharp and clear. But some of the photos gathered at places like Lee Hampel's field display many inexplicable light forms and possible animals, and the sheer volume of anomalous images taken there — around 2,000 at last count — is compelling in its own right.

At the end of the day, for me the best evidence is still found in the many firsthand eyewitness reports from people who show no evidence of deception, illness that produces hallucination, or desire for reward. There are simply too many such reports for all of them to be hoaxes, and they seem to be increasing in recent years (although that may be partly due to more TV and Internet exposure).

This shows that it behooves researchers to do the best possible job of documenting and investigating reports. Who knows what some sharp-eyed, attuned witness may someday be able to add to the discussion?

**Q: Talk about common misconceptions about the paranormal field that you've encountered?**

**Linda:** One notion I'd like to dispel right off the bat is that writing a book about any paranormal topic is a sure road to riches. I hear this all the time. The truth is, most people are in this field mainly for love of the subject matter.

The paranormal is what publishers call a niche market, meaning books on subjects like upright canines or ghost hunting seldom make a big impact on your wallet given the work required to research and write a readable book. Not that this should stop anyone who has something interesting to put forth in print or video. It's just a reality check. And of course, there's always bound to be an exception to any rule.

Another thing I run into when I give talks on the *Weird* books is the belief that all apparent ghosts are the spirits of specific dead people. Most researchers I'm acquainted with think there are many possible origins for these ethereal forms, too many to list here.

Yet another area of misinformation concerns the legendary creatures known as werewolves. Many people believe any dog or wolf walking upright is really a human who changes its form every full moon, bites people to create new werewolves, and can only be killed by a silver bullet. If that's true, a lot of "dancing dog" acts are in real trouble! Many of these beliefs are from ancient folklore

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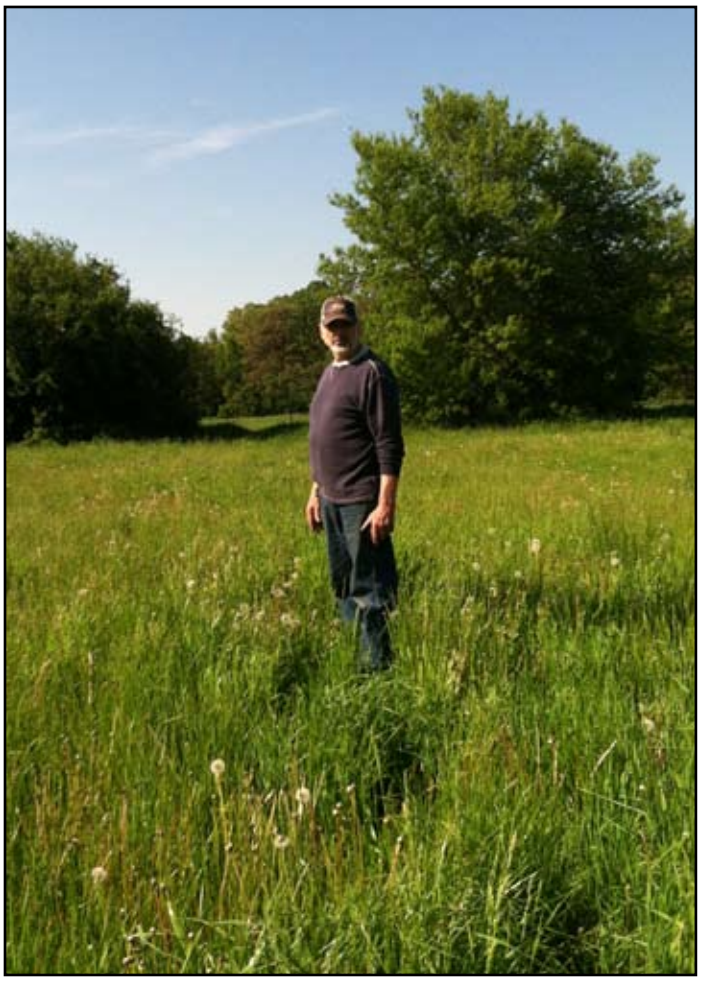

**Property owner Lee Hampel is pictured above in his Wisconsin hayfield, looking at the treeline where a light sphere first originated and was witnessed by Linda, Lee, and researcher Sanjay Singhal.**

built upon in early 20th Century Hollywood movies. As I've noted regarding different categories of ghosts, I think the unusual canines also have more than one explanation.

Perhaps the most common mistake I encounter in the fields of both cryptozoology and the paranormal is the assumption that anyone can simply visit a place where previous sightings of cryptids, apparitions, or other phenomena have occurred and then easily, quickly experience the same thing. It seldom happens. Such encounters are usually rare, random, and brief. That misconception often spawns a second one, however: People who don't immediately see what they are looking for may conclude that since they didn't experience it, it must not exist.

> "... THE BEST EVIDENCE IS STILL FOUND IN THE MANY FIRST-HAND EYEWITNESS REPORTS ..."

**Q: Tell us about your new book, *Monsters Among Us*.**

**Linda:** *Monsters Among Us*, released in October 2016 by Tarcher/Perigee, explores the idea that many of the forms and creatures we call supernatural or paranormal may be related in unknown ways.

This book documents many previously unpublished encounter tales, including much of my personal research in that southern Wisconsin field, and looks for associations with other phenomena. Many of those encounters include rare glimpses of shape-shifting and humanoid-looking creatures that require new paradigms, including a look at the idea of space-time portals. I also researched moon phase and solar activity for encounters with accurate dates and found some surprising preliminary results.

**Q: Whose work in the paranormal field do you respect the most and why?**

**Linda:** There are too many giants in the field to name, but a good example would be British researchers and authors Janet Bord and Colin Bord. They were already mapping out creature sightings areas and discussing possibilities as to the nature of certain cryptids in 1980 in their book *Alien Animals*, a favorite on my personal bookshelf.

It includes speculations on what the Bords call BHMs, or Big Hairy Monsters, and their possible relationship to electromagnetic fields, as well as thoughts on UFOs and other associated topics. They've also inspired me in other books, such as *Mysterious Great Britain*, and I'm grateful for all they have communicated about their studies.

**Q: What locations or paranormal research topics do you have on your wish list to investigate?**

**Linda:** It's a long wish list, but topping it right now are some locations in Maine and the Pacific Northwest and a trip to the UK to visit sites of historic and contemporary black dog sightings.

**Q: What words of wisdom would you offer amateur paranormal investigators?**

**Linda:** Realize, as I said above, that glimpses of unknown phenomena are usually rare and fleeting. Many researchers dedicate their lives to the field without personally seeing whatever they are hunting. This shouldn't be taken as discouragement, as I believe we each have our own part to play in the search for truth.

Also, I always stress that investigators need to inform and prepare themselves for any mundane hazards in the area they plan to research, including weather, insects, local predators, and challenging terrain. You're much more likely to run into a feisty, white tail buck in rut than a Bigfoot, and your chances of tripping and falling on a steep slope are higher than the odds you'll walk into a portal.

Likewise, old, haunted structures may harbor unfriendly human squatters or people meeting for unsavory purposes. Always think safety first.

And my favorite mantra when schlepping a forest trail or scoping out a midnight haunting hotspot? Always look up, always look behind you, and always watch where you step.

**Q: What else should our readers know about you?**

**Linda:** After 25 years in this field, I still consider myself a long-time student of the unexplained, rather than an "expert." I'm also an artist/illustrator with a degree in art education and a lifelong Lutheran with a great love for church basement potlucks.

My first book was a true historic crime tome called *The Poison Widow: a True Story of Sin, Strychnine, and Murder*. I also write fantasy novels, with one published. It's called *God Johnson: The Unforgiven Diary*, about a very old demi-god who purposely chooses to look like Abe Lincoln so that potential followers will trust him, and, of course, one young woman falls for it.

I live with my husband and our dog, Grendel, in Bigfoot-and-dogman-infested Southern Wisconsin, and I still average one or two reports of strange creatures per week from around the world.

* * * * *

*To learn more about Linda S. Godfrey visit http://lindagodfrey.com and http://www.facebook.com/LindaGodfreyAuthor.* ◆

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# HELL RANCH: EVIL AWAKENS

By Cheryl Knight

A low-budget film crew, determined to film the next horror cult classic, begins shooting in a ghost town. What they don't know is that the horrors awaiting them in reality are far worse than those staged on set. *Hell Ranch: Evil Awakens* is set to premiere in fall 2017, according to writer and director Brad Ryal.

We recently spoke to Brad about what we can expect from Hell Ranch, and he revealed a few teasers.

"I don't want to give too much away, but *Hell Ranch* is going to take you back to old-fashioned horror. This movie isn't like all the rest; it has its own type of scare factor," he said.

Continue reading to find out more about the film, as well as Brad's upcoming projects ...

* * * * *

**Q: Tell us about yourself.**

**Brad:** My name is Brad Ryal. I grew up in a small town in Michigan called Mason. I have two brothers and, of course, a mother. My father passed away when I was three years old. I never had many friends and was actually bullied quite a bit.

I was a huge fan of the Saturday morning television series *Saved by the Bell*. That show, believe it or not, helped raised me. Don't get me wrong; my mother did a wonderful job, but within the show, there were episodes on drinking and driving, drugs, etc. When you watch it on TV, you tend to pick things up.

**Q: How did you first get into writing and acting?**

**Brad:** Good question ... back to *Saved by the Bell*!

**In *Hell Ranch: Evil Awakens*, a low-budget film crew determined to film the next horror cult classic doesn't realize the very real horrors they are about to encounter.**

**The movie, directed by Brad Ryal and starring Tom Sizemore, Sarah Butler, Dave Vescio, and Areana Cirina, is set to premiere in fall 2017.**

Watching that show motivated me to want to be involved with this industry. I always thought it looked so fun to do what they did for a living. To be able to wake up every day, go to a film set, and entertain! What an amazing job!

I mentioned to my mother that I wanted to be an entertainer. Of course, at first she looked at me like I was crazy. Then she sat me down and told me I could do anything I wanted to in life but to keep one foot in the real world! Not sure why, but that last part pissed me off (haha). I always hated when she told me to keep one foot in the real world. To me it was a real world, and I was going to make it happen.

As far as writing goes, well writing was my strong suit. I can create a story. I remember one specific day at school. My mother had asked me if I had homework. I told her no, because I just didn't want to do it. I then, without a second thought, made up a 10-minute story about how I didn't have homework. She believed me, and I walked into my room thinking, *You're so awesome; you pulled it off.* That's when I knew writing was going to be for me.

**Brad Ryal has always had a passion for writing, acting, and directing. His favorite horror writers include Wes Craven, Eli Roth, and Don Mancini.**

**Q: Tell us about your creative works to date.**

**Brad:** There is my first official Screenplay I wrote in 2001 titled *Down Angel*, which will finally film in 2017. I'm currently in the works on a horror film titled *Hell Ranch: Evil Awakens*, starring Tom Sizemore and Areana Cirina.

> "I AM A HUGE FAN OF THE *INSIDIOUS* FILMS. I ALSO LOVE *THE CONJURING* AND WATCHING *GHOST HUNTERS*."

And coming in 2018, I will dip into the mobster world with *True Gangster*. And let's not forget 8*213 Summerdale*, about the return of the demonic entity of serial rapist and killer John Wayne Gacy.

**Q: What can you tell us about your newest feature film, *Hell Ranch*?**

**Brad:** When casting I had to find the most versatile actors. I wanted actors that were very talented and already had done some horror films.

I had made a Facebook casting call for video submissions. I watched a ton, but only one really stood out to me. Her name was Areana Cirina. She really blew me away with a monologue she did. After doing some research on her, I found out she had been on a few episodes of *American Horror Story*.

I reached out to her and told her she was my girl! When I showed up to set to film the teaser trailer, I knew I had made the right decision! She was phenomenal. I didn't have to do multiple takes. She nailed what I asked for every time. [See the sidebar featuring Areana on the next page.]

**Q: What spurred you to write *Hell Ranch*?**

**Brad:** I was out in the high desert of California, the Ridgecrest area. I drove through this smaller town called Randsburg. It literally hit me like a sack of bricks that I had to write a horror film around the place.

The town is old and worn down; just driving through it sent chills down my spine. All and all, it's just too spooky not to mix some Hollywood in it.

**Q: Is *Hell Ranch* based on a true story?**

**Brad:** According to the minimal amount of townspeople it does have, they say, "Why don't you come out here after dark and find out!"

**Q: Have you ever had any paranormal experiences? If so, what happened?**

→

# Meet Actress Areana Cirina!

From a young age, Areana Cirina has always been an entertainer. She loves to make people laugh, even if that means making a fool of herself doing so. Her love of acting has pushed her through some tough times. From betrayal, heartbreak, rumors, and other such negativity, these trials have only made Areana stronger and wiser.

One day, she'd like to inspire others to reach for their dreams, encouraging them to keep pushing for what they love most. She believes, that with hard work, determination, and enough belief in oneself that anything is possible.

"The only thing standing in the way of achieving success is doubt in one's ability to achieve the success," said Areana.

Though Areana's life has been much of a dramatic movie in itself, she is happy to have lived the experiences she has.

"When I was a little girl, I was always considered the 'weird' girl. Not weird, as in freaky weird, but just odd or unusual ... unique. I always dressed eccentrically and very much to my own style," said Areana.

"A certain friend of mine used to tell me, 'I just love how you dress ... only you have the confidence enough to pull it off.' I can tell you now that my taste in clothing is a bit more refined; however, some may still argue with that."

Areana says she has always lived life by her own rules and doesn't believe that people should tell her how to dress, talk, or what makeup to wear just to be 'cool.'

"I am my own person as each of us are. And we are born exactly perfect and just how we are supposed to be," she said. "Some may consider flaws a weakness, but I say it is our genetic mark on this earth. Be who you are, because that is the most beautiful form you can be." ◆

**Brad:** Yes. I am and will forever be a fan of the paranormal. In 2011, I went with a smaller paranormal team to the Villisca Axe Murder House in Villisca, Iowa. It was around 2:30 in the morning, and I was sitting in the attic where the killer had hid before he committed his gruesome murders. I was trying to provoke the children to come out, as I was bouncing a red ball. After the third bounce, the ball literally bounced away from me as if it was being taken.

Shortly after, I felt a really bad burn on my lower back. A few minutes later after leaving the attic, I had gone back downstairs to see if I had caught any audio. Sure enough, right before I was scratched, you can hear a little girl laughing. Then you hear, "Boyd's gonna get you. One of the little boy's that was murdered there was named Boyd.

**Q: Who are your favorite horror writers?**

**Brad:** I have a few. The late Wes Craven, Eli Roth, and Don Mancini (gotta love Chucky)!

**Q: What are your top paranormal-inspired films, TV shows, or books?**

**Brad:** I am a huge fan of the *Insidious* films. I also love *The Conjuring* and watching *Ghost Hunters*.

**Q: What would our readers be surprised to find out about you?**

**Brad:** As much as I love horror, I never watched the original *Exorcist* movie until I was 22 years old. When I finally watched it, my response was, "That's it? Really, that's it?"

**Q: What research or projects do you have planned for the future?**

**Brad:** I have a few gems coming up. Again, I dip my foot into the mobster world with *True Gangster*. There may even be a *Hell Ranch* sequel ... stay tuned to find out!

* * * * *

*For more information about Hell Ranch, visit http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6087284/ and https://mobile.twitter.com/hellranchmovie.* ◆

# THE LINEUP

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# HEAVEN & HELL:
## *A DESTINATION OR STATE OF SPIRIT?*

By Jill Marie Morris, www.jillmariemorris.com

Heaven, the Pearly Gates, Utopia, Nirvana; each a broad-sweeping term established to describe the token destination of the soul after its often tumultuous journey on terra firma. Despite so many validations of its existence, why are we humans creating more unrest than acceptance as we quest for an answer?

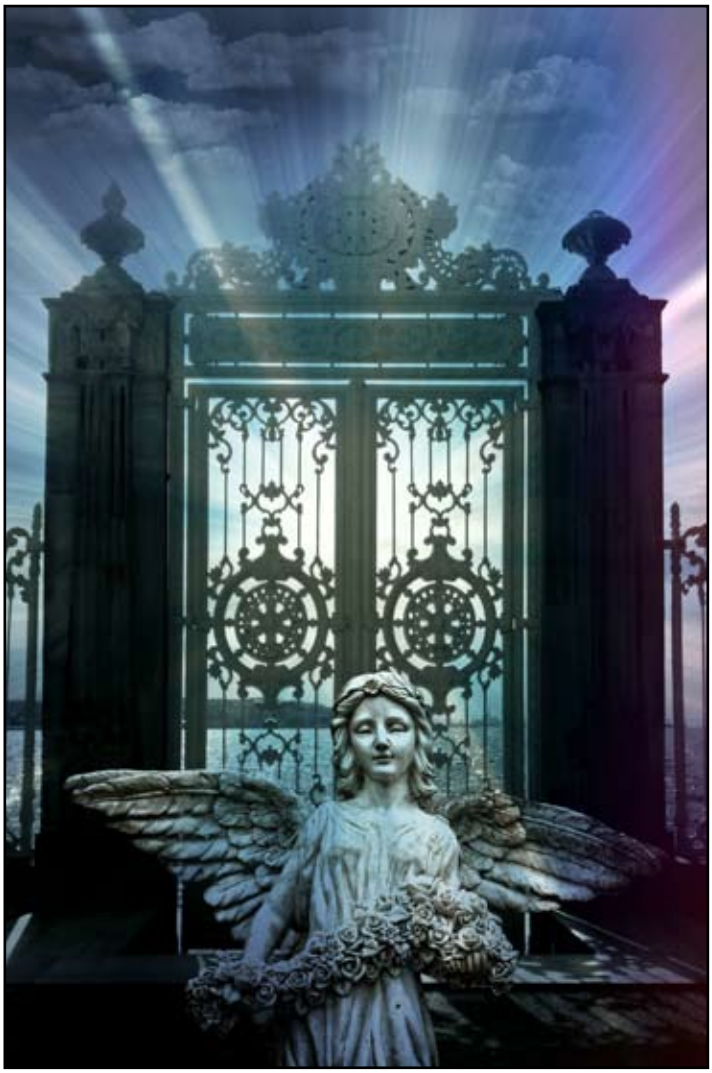
In order to look into this, it's best to remove religion from the equation. After all, each faith has its own doctrine, as well as plan to get you to the ethereal land of Milky Way and Honey. Simply said, by barring those rules and bylaws, one has a much better chance of grasping and attaining eternal peace on the flip side of our physical existence on Earth.

Raised Roman Catholic, it was instilled in me at a young age that the only spirit that exists is the Holy Spirit. We live, we die, and for the most part we go to Heaven or Hell. Sometimes, Purgatory holds a soul over, which seemingly complicates matters even more.

Enter the ridiculously high number of psychic readings I have given since the age of 18. Even while practicing Catholicism, I was conflicted when so many happy, peaceful spirits refused to speak of Heaven. In a collaborative sense, a genuine awareness that something may be askew in the celestial plane began to evolve with each and every one of the readings.

There does appear to be a state of spirit that illuminates the soul with joy post-life. Countless times, spirit has relayed messages and described a state that is beautiful, indescribable, amazing, breathtaking, and unbelievable, yet not once stated there *is* a Heaven or they are in Heaven.

Regardless, there is no doubt as to how it presents.



Each positive energy presents with a "lightness" or buoyancy that is simply incredible to experience as a medium. In every one of these examples, I can safely state that their souls are in a state of bliss. They are totally content.

Some souls seem to be able to slip between various dimensions and times. This is interesting considering I refer to spirit who have come from all different walks of life and faiths during their physical journey.

Of more interest is the fact their essence can fluctuate and change from a euphoric state to one of concern, even anger, due to the events and activities of living family and friends. At times, they even come back to relay anxiety over global issues. The bottom line: They continue to feel and observe in an emotional way.

The preponderance and teaching of Heaven as a final stop seems a bit wonky. It makes no sense as a destination. It is important to understand that not every spirit is at peace, nor do they present as buoyant as their reconciled counterparts. Consider the aforementioned comment about fluctuations: It happens — a lot.

The most notable thread connecting the living and dead is the emotional and spiritual connection. Religion only appears to play a minor part in the spiritual equation. This is evidenced by spirit's acknowledgment of their religious practices prior to death and the actual outcome post-death. References to a doctrine are often made; however, the final or spiritual destinations as prescribed by said religions fall short and appear to be more of the conscious, human thought. This rolls back to the significance of faith laying foundational blocks for the living yet having no direct impact on placement or destination of spirit in death. In short, religion keeps the living in-check and establishes a linear way of thinking: We are born, and we die. Be good, or else.

Yes, religious symbols are often communicated as part of a reading. Quite often they are conveyed as a point of validation. On the same token, prayer is a big occurrence, yet more so in general terms. Some spirit convey they want the living to pray in more of a nondenominational way. Hands folded in prayer and intense light surrounding the hands of spirit are also common — even for those who may have been agnostic or atheist. The bottom line: Spirit typically requests prayers as a means of shifting energy in a positive manner.

> THE ULTIMATE STATE OF A BUOYANT OR LIGHT SPIRIT OPERATES ON A MUCH WIDER DIMENSION THAN ITS HEAVIER AND MORE LIMITED COUNTERPARTS.

The ultimate state of a buoyant or light spirit operates on a much wider dimension than its heavier and more limited counterparts. It involves free will of spirit taking into account life choices and beliefs, as well as the mindset and physical state at the time of passing. If all of these elements shore-up at death leaving little to reconcile or amend, spirit will present very light and free.

Collectively, all elements converge at the time of death resulting in a final imprint. This imprint sets the course or direction of the overall state of spirit as it embarks on a completely different journey.

Manner of death, mental, emotional, physical, and

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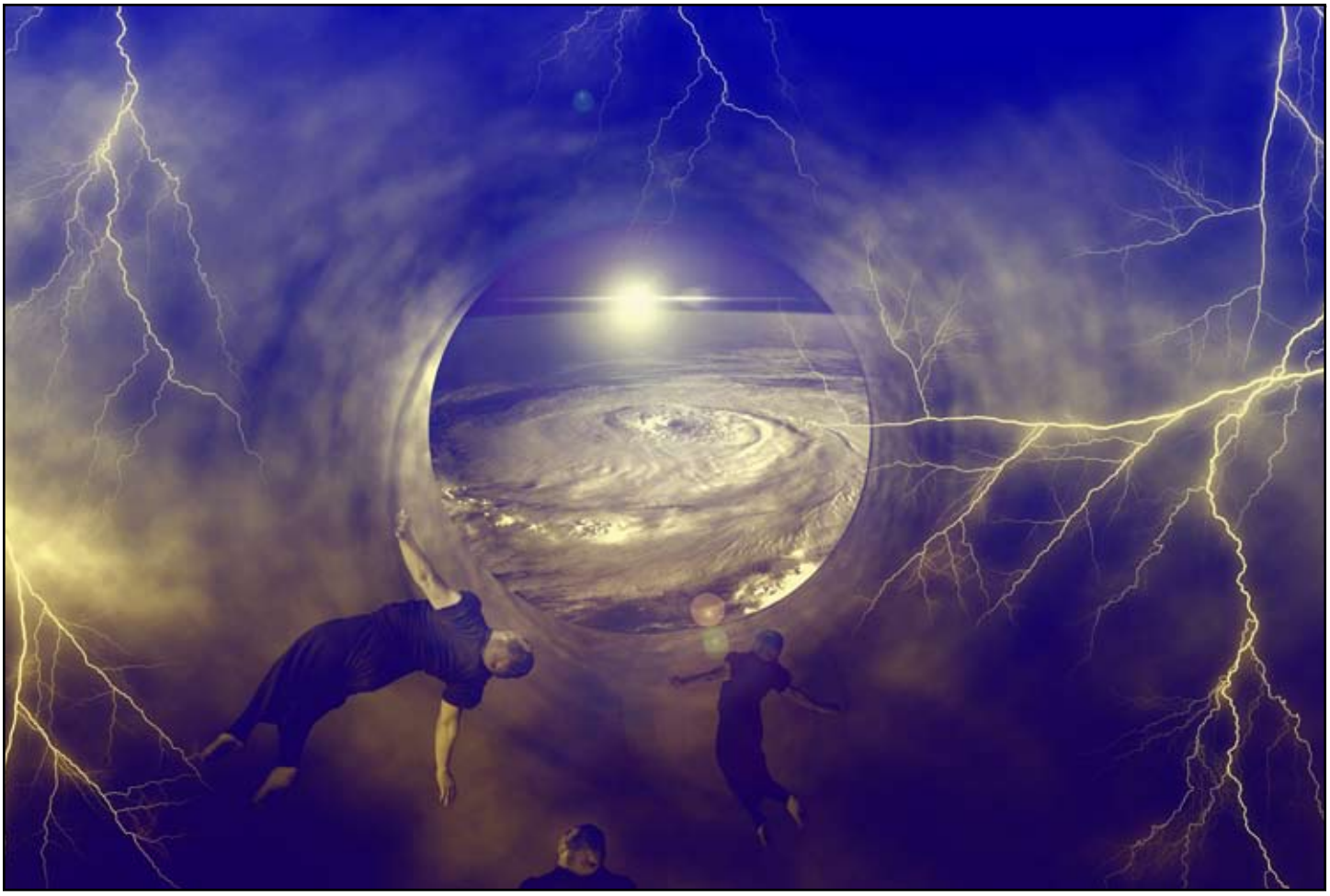

spiritual components, congruent with free will, shape the spiritual and emotional path in the afterlife. The body, a mere vessel to carry the soul while in human form during the physical life, has an impact only in a way that would be more along the lines of reincarnation or, as seen more frequently, is used only to demonstrate a means of validating physical characteristics of spirit's human life form.

In my opinion, the physical body is specifically used for the present dimension involving its literal time on Earth as a human. The same applies to pets and animal spirits.

Since the body has no impact on spirit (other than up to the moment of death), it is my opinion that this is the reason spirit most often reverts to a time when they were happy and healthy. In readings, presentation of the physical body serves only for purpose of visual cue to the living. For most souls, spirit essence reverts to wholeness and purity. They also become all-knowing and omnipresent.

Never does spirit complain of physical pain, but they do make it known what transpired during their death. Of special note is the fact that they are pain-free despite having suffered horribly tragic and excruciatingly painful deaths.

Another important mention is the fact the essence of spirit remains the same as pre-death. Most often, spirit retains the same sense of humor (or lack thereof), as well as the same diction. If they swore as a human, they will curse in spirit. It serves as a reminder that the physical body plays very little in the bigger picture and that we simply need it to walk the walk and talk the talk of life.

> Upon crossing, it is up to spirit whether or not they want to come back and mingle with the living.

Putting this into perspective, the emotional components of spirit are able to transfer into different dimensions, whereas the human body cannot. As you will find, some souls can stall during transition out of the physical body for a number or reasons, as well as fall into darkness.

More times than not, I have been in contact with spirits who did not expect to be able to communicate post-death. There can be quite a bit of confusion based upon expectations presented during their physical life, specifically pertaining to instilled religious beliefs and values.

Does this mean spirit will be disheartened after passing? Not at all. Most are content and come to relay they are in awe of how they feel. Many did not think it was possible to come back and exist with the living. In cases such as these, it is best summed up as: *So, this is how it works?!*

Upon crossing, it is up to spirit whether or not they want to come back and mingle with the living. Receiving message from spirit does not mean they are not at peace. To me, this is fascinating, having had conversations with cancer patients and even a dear friend who died of the disease. Each individual had a different set of beliefs. When asked what I thought about their final destination, I only advised for them to keep an open mind and heart.

Astonishingly, my dear friend came back rather soon after his passing, and of all things, he was completely smitten by the fact he could go anywhere, including to the Great Pyramids. His spirit was so amped up with this newfound freedom that it was akin to a little kid in a candy store. He was truly at peace, and his entire essence had been energized. This was a beautiful thing to see, considering the painful manner in which he passed.

Even lighter spirit can become moody without entering darkness. Spirit reacts in an emotional manner to what transpires around them. For instance, since they are all-knowing, anything that adversely impacts a loved one, or even affects a spirit's environment, can create a fluctuation in their energy. Just because they may get grumpy doesn't mean they plummet into darkness.

Once they have achieved lightness of soul, they will keep their freedoms, yet occasionally may become weighted with worry for the living. Most times, drawing attention to those concerns and assisting the living with pathways to problem solve will help diminish spirit's worry and restore them to a lighter state.

More weighted imprints transpire at the end of life and in the course of death when the physical life was not reconciled. This could be due to a host of problems, including health matters, relationship issues, and an unsettled spiritual foundation. It may also include interference by means of oppression and/or possession, even an unimaginable and dark influence (not demonic in nature).

One possible consideration of oppressions and possessions could be the dimensional slips via fractured psyche, etc., resulting in the human body's surrender to evil forces. A fracture allows a dark entity to travel, or slip, into the physical plane.

As for suicides, well, you will be surprised to know that not all souls who died at their own hands are unhappy or condemned to Purgatory or Hell. It's free will. I will never condone the taking of one's life, but objectively speaking as a medium, it simply is up to spirit. At times, suicide is a reset of the soul. At other times, suicide may be a bit more complicated from a spiritual perspective.

So, if Heaven may not exist, what about Hell? Where do the truly evil humans go after they die? Well the answer is a bit dark.

Evil humans seem to be cast into a dimension or plane of darkness. Visualize this as a black echo chamber; a plane completely opposite of the freedoms purer souls tend to have. These individuals are weighted in a plane that interchanges or slips into other levels. This type of spirit tends to bounce between this plane and the lowest, or a demonic dimension of darkness. Simply put: You cannot have one without the other.

Demons and their like, including extremely negative energies, do seem to have the capability to move about

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on a restricted basis, but only in the right (or, shall I say wrong) settings. They need to be nourished and, in turn, seek to feed upon humans. They devour human souls and need the physical bodies of the living to carry out their destructive tendencies. They literally prey on the living in search of a fracture by which to eventually commit a hostile takeover.

Think of it as a cesspool of thick, dank energy resembling a globular, unstructured, yet self-encapsulated, plane drifting about. Although they may slip dimensions after latching onto the living, they also inject that darkness into the living host. That darkness permeates the soul of the living and can eventually cause them to commit crimes, including murder, and at times even suicide.

Upon the death of someone infected with a dark spirit or demonic energy, one of two things can occur: The soul of the inflicted can be released by prayer and other spiritual remedies post-death, or not. It's important to remember that truly dark and demonic forces need the living to carry out their hellacious, earthly tendencies.

In my opinion, the trend for those who are not released has to do with an innate and dark nature of the living, pre-death. This also applies to those who may be perceived as being born evil or having committed atrocities in their human lives. In other words: Watch your step. The living evil can be impacted by dark and demonic forces. If that's the case, they are the tastiest of food sources for the worst of the worst.

Have the dead mentioned Hell by name? No, not to me, yet the essence of human spirit encapsulated in the dark and heavy dimension(s) exude a state of hell, minus the fire, pitchforks, and ash. Demonic and evil do co-mingle on different planes in certain settings. I believe that true darkness and evil will remain that way on a continuum, creating vicious cycles of life and death.

Take a demonic force, for example. A demon seeks to feed off a desirable, living host. If it takes over and destroys that person by suicide, the demon or entity is either going to metabolize it and use it to gain strength or vomit it out. It (the demon) only vomits out the good, or those who have been forgiven or spiritually remedied after death. In this case, upon emesis, the good soul is released.

Now, if the host's soul was evil, it remains part of the demonic force. The consumed soul serves to strengthen the demonic force and, in turn, helps it to find more food. Think of dark and demonic energies as varying from skinny to obese. The porkier of the lot tend to have eaten and digested many, making them incredibly dangerous to deal with.

To avoid ending this article on a dark note, it's important to understand that enlightened souls are truly at peace and can impart love, strength, and light upon the living. They also instill hope. They have complete freedom to move about, and they often do so. Think of wide open spaces without boundaries, as opposed to those entrapped and confined to darkness.

Could this be construed as Heaven? Absolutely. But from my vantage point, I believe the dimension of spirit to be more heavenly in nature rather than existing in a place called Heaven. Again, the next stage of the soul's journey is truly subjective to each spirit's unique physical life.

Lastly, interchangeable planes exist. They allow spirit and enigmatic energies to move around and cross different dimensions. How they impact the living really does depend upon how the living is taking care of themselves — physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually during the course of life.

As for Heaven and Hell? Well, that is up to the reader to figure out. I can only illustrate that there are no neon signs that say: *Welcome to Heaven* or *Welcome to Hell*. However, there are varying states of spirit that can sometimes interchange, and it's based upon *how you have lived your life*. Live it well.◆

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# GHOSTS OF WAR: 8 HAUNTED WAR MEMORIALS

By Jessica Ferri, via The Lineup, www.the-line-up.com

Every year, the living pay their respects to fallen soldiers and the victims of conflict by visiting war memorials. Given the sheer number of lives lost at these haunting sites, it's no wonder that visitors experience profound melancholy. Others encounter eerie activity that cannot be explained.

Let's take a look at eight haunted war memorials and the legends and personal experiences surrounding them.

**Visitors to Gettysburg report strange experiences, including the screams of fallen soldiers and horses and direct encounters with the dead.**

### 1. Gettysburg Battlefield and Memorial (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania)

It's difficult to imagine the carnage that was Gettysburg, especially considering the crude methods of Civil War-era warfare. The battle claimed 51,000 casualties and left 7,863 dead. The open fields have since become a National Park, with an enormous list of monuments commemorating the Union and Confederate units that marched during that three-day battle in July 1863.

In addition to the battlefields themselves, there's also the adjoining Gettysburg National Cemetery, the resting place for more than 3,500 Union soldiers.

Given the intensity of the battle and the enormous loss of life, it's not surprising that visitors to Gettysburg report strange experiences, including the sound of whirring bullets, the screams of fallen soldiers and horses, and direct encounters with the dead.

At Farnsworth House, which was riddled with bullets during the campaign, visitors report the specter of a distraught man carrying a child in a quilt and the ghost of a fallen Confederate sharp shooter.

Others report ghostly apparitions at Devil's Den, the site of one of the longest and most intense skirmishes during the battle that raged on through the night. Some visitors have captured spirits on camera, including a long-haired young man who told one tourist "what you are looking for is over there" and then abruptly vanished.

### 2. Antietam Battlefield and Memorial (Near Sharpsburg, Maryland)

The Battle of Antietam, the first major engagement to take place on Union soil in 1862, is second only to Gettysburg in its massive carnage, with more than 22,717 dead, wounded, or missing. Though, technically, a Union victory once Confederates retreated from the field, many historians view Antietam as tactically inconclusive — a major loss of life with little strategic gain.

If you visit Antietam today, you will come across a sunken road, now called the Bloody Lane, where more than 5,000 Union and Confederate soldiers lost their lives.

Visitors have reported the smell of gunpowder and the sound of gunfire when the lane appears completely deserted. Others have seen men in Confederate dress walking down the lane toward them, only to disappear into thin air.

Even the sound of singing has been heard on this eerily quiet battlefield. Those who detected the ghostly tune said it sounded like "Deck the Halls." Apparently, some Irish-American Confederates used a Gaelic hymn as a battle cry during Antietam — a hymn that sounded very close to the holiday song.

### 3. Point Lookout Lighthouse (Near Scotland, Maryland)

Now a national park and historic site, Maryland's Point Lookout played a major role in the American Civil War as a prison for Confederate soldiers. At one time more than 50,000 men were held here, and 4,000 never left — they were buried in the swampy marsh of the Chesapeake Bay. The overcrowding of Confederate prisoners resulted in poor conditions, and Point Lookout quickly became one of the most notorious Union prison camps of the war.

The lives of the men who suffered here are remembered in a war memorial cemetery — which is, in actuality, a mass grave. Visitors today report a multitude of paranormal phenomena, including shouts for help heard from the water and the ghostly figures of soldiers running from what used to be the smallpox hospital.

Most of the activity seems to be centered in the lighthouse, where a young man in sailor's dress has been seen entering the lighthouse only to disappear into thin air.

### 4. Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme (Somme, France)

Of the many memorials to the fallen soldiers of World War I, Sir Edwin Lutyens' Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, is one of the most chilling — dedicated to the 72,195 missing British and South African servicemen who never returned from the Battles of the Somme between 1915 and 1918.

Nestled in the forests of Thiepval in northern France, this statuesque memorial bears the names of nearly 72,000 missing soldiers with no known grave. Surrounding the memorial are other mass graves, dug during the war around medical stations.

After the major battles of the Somme, Irish artist William Orpen traveled to France in 1917 to capture the battlefields for those at home. What he found was grisly: The artist was surrounded by mangled forests and skeletons still dressed in ragged uniforms. Both Orpen and war painter Henri Joffroy reported strange activity in the woods at Thiepval. Orpen claimed a phantom force attacked him while painting in a seemingly abandoned field, and Joffroy was hit with the overwhelming stench of rotting flesh, even though the bodies in the field had lain there for over a year.

**Point Lookout, including the lighthouse, is home to vast paranormal phenomena, including shouts for help heard from the water and the ghostly figures of soldiers running from what used to be the smallpox hospital.**

### 5. Brest Fortress (Brest, Belarus)

The defense of Brest Fortress on June 22–June 29, 1941, was one of the first battles during the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union during WWII. Soviet soldiers were caught unawares by the strike and withdrew into the fortress in Brest. They held out for a week until bombing forced the remaining 360 Soviet soldiers to surrender. In the years following the war, the defense of Brest fortress came to symbolize Soviet determination and resistance.

In 1971, a memorial was founded at the site of Brest Fortress and gigantic sculptures were erected. One sculpture, entitled "Thirst," depicts an injured soldier struggling to get water from a river. Another gargantuan soldier greets visitors with a look of defiance on his face. Inside one of the walls of the fortress is a scrawled inscription that reflects the determination of the troops. "I'm dying," says the inscription, "but I won't surrender. Farewell Motherland!"

### 6. USS Arizona Memorial (Honolulu, Hawaii)

The ghostly wreckage of the USS Arizona is now a memorial to the 1,102 American sailors and Marines that lost their lives during the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. A total of 2,403 people were killed

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**Visitors to the USS Arizona Memorial in Hawaii have reported capturing strange orbs on film and hearing disembodied screams.**

during the bombing, prompting the United States to enter World War II.

Built in 1962, the memorial straddles the wreckage of the USS Arizona and is only accessible by boat. Of the visitors that come to pay their respects to the men and women who were killed on that infamous day, many have reported capturing strange orbs on film and even faces and figures in the water and in the memorial. Others claim to hear the sound of an air raid alarm, even though this is not part of the museum.

Janitors have reported the sounds of screams and scraping metal. Others still report an eerie mist that skims the water's surface and takes the shape of a Japanese fighter plane.

### 7. Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial (Near Colleville-sur-Mer, France)

The memorial to the American troops who lost their lives during the Allied invasion of Normandy is breathtaking in its scope: 9,387 American soldiers are buried here, alongside 307 unknown soldiers. The cemetery overlooks Omaha Beach, one of the landing beaches of the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944.

Thousands of tourists travel to Normandy every year to honor all those who lost their lives, especially those American soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice on European soil.

Visitors report feeling overwhelmed by the sight of thousands of white grave markers on the rolling hills above the beach. Others feel a distinct sense of unease. One family, however, had a particularly eerie experience when their seven-year-old daughter reported seeing a group of men looking at her while they visited the remains of the bunkers on the beach.

Upon later questioning, she identified German soldiers in a photograph from WWII as the men she had seen on the beach, even describing their guns and the buttons on their clothing with astounding historical accuracy.

### 8. Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Hiroshima, Japan)

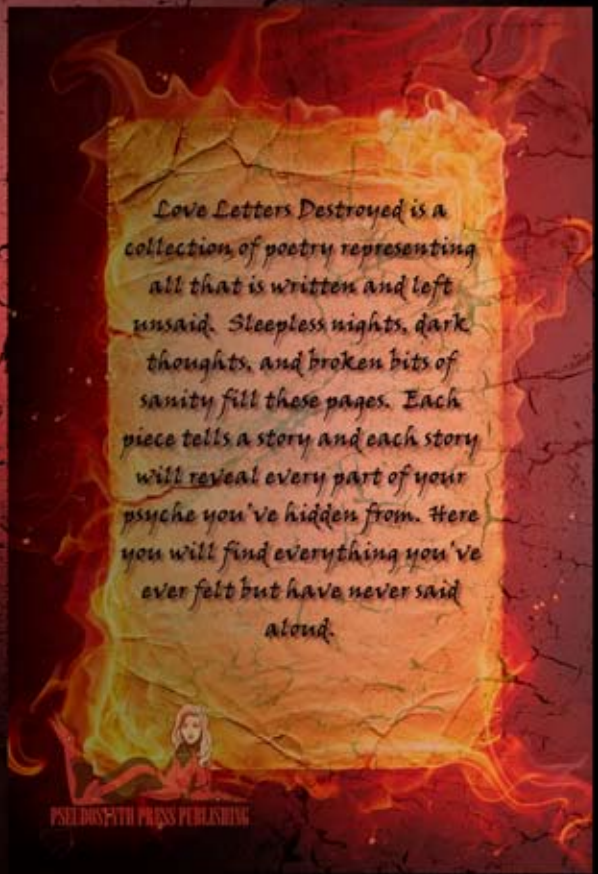
The ghostly ruin of the only remaining structure to survive the drop of the nuclear warhead on Hiroshima is enough to make any person uncomfortable. More than 70,000 people were killed instantly on August 6, 1945, and at least another 70,000 suffered radiation-related injuries and sickness.

Now, the building's dome and surrounding grounds serve as Hiroshima's plea for peace and the end of nuclear war in the form of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial.

Though some have claimed they captured the face of a ghost embedded in the side of the dome in photographs, the hard facts of the Hiroshima memorial are far more terrifying. The museum includes a historical outline of events leading up to August 6 and artifacts recovered just after the attack — such as radiation shadows and human remains — that are nothing short of absolutely bone-chilling.

It is estimated that 60 million people were killed as a result of WWII, about three percent of the planet's population in 1940.◆

*Love Letters Destroyed* is Winter Balefire's first book of poetry now available at Amazon, Lulu, Barnes & Noble and all fine retailers that sell great books. Pick it up in eBook and signed paperback editions today!


Love Letters Destroyed is a collection of poetry representing all that is written and left unsaid. Sleepless nights, dark thoughts, and broken bits of sanity fill these pages. Each piece tells a story and each story will reveal every part of your psyche you've hidden from. Here you will find everything you've ever felt but have never said aloud.
PSEUDONYM PRESS PUBLISHING

# Was Inventor Nikola Tesla a UFO Contactee?

**Sean Casteel, www.spectralvision.wordpress.com**

In the more than 70 years since his death, Nikola Tesla has never ceased to be a fascinating, mysterious figure dwelling somewhere outside the borders of history as it is understood by the unseeing masses. While we, as a 21st Century civilization, continue to reap the benefits of his outsized genius, Tesla has yet to be given the recognition he deserves as a major architect of the relatively technologically comfortable age we live in.

Still, there are those of us who do give Tesla his due, belatedly but sincerely. This article will deal with an aspect of Tesla's genius that has gotten short shrift even from those of us who revere his name: UFO contact.

And that theory is nowhere better espoused than in *The Lost Journals of Nikola Tesla* by Tim R. Swartz. Swartz's bestselling classic has recently been updated and reissued by Global Communications and is worth a new look whether you've read the first edition or not.

I interviewed Tim Swartz a few years ago for one of Tim Beckley's now-defunct newsstand magazines, and Swartz laid out some historical background of Tesla's earliest beginnings.

**Nikola Tesla was an inventor, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, physicist, and futurist, who some deemed a "super genius."**

"Tesla was born in Yugoslavia in what is now Croatia, at midnight between July 9 and July 10 in 1856," Swartz said. "He had that spark of genius right from the very beginning. There are a couple of people, I think, throughout our history, that you could classify as a 'super genius.' That's the best word I can think of. Most people would agree that Einstein was one of our greatest geniuses. Maybe Leonardo da Vinci. And Nikola Tesla should fit right up there with those guys, because he just seemed to have this mind that was open to the Universe.

"I suppose that's a rather esoteric way of looking at it, but he had the ability to visualize his ideas to such a point that he could actually 'see' what he was visualizing in three dimensions," Swartz continued. "As he put it, 'It seemed to hang in the air right in front of my eyes.'"

Nowadays, Tesla is best known to the general public as the inventor of the AC motor.

"Our entire system of electricity works with AC current. In Tesla's day, Thomas Edison had come up with a system to deliver electricity to houses and buildings based on the DC current, direct currents," Swartz explained. "DC current works fine, but it can't be sent over any great distance. Probably every half mile to a mile you would have to have a station that would step the power back up again and send it on for another half a mile or so. A very inefficient system, and really only good for close areas, like New York City. That's where Edison had initially done some wiring."

Tesla, by contrast, created a motor based on alternating current, which can travel hundreds of miles before it has to be retransmitted. This was a revolution for its time. Tesla came up with a working version of an AC motor and was the first to build, at Niagara Falls, a massive power-generating station that supplied electricity to New York City.

"It was cheap, clean, efficient, and it actually worked," Swartz said. "That's probably Tesla's greatest claim to fame."

Tesla followed up that achievement by inventing radio. Though popularly credit for radio is given to Marconi, the Supreme Court declared some years after Tesla had died that Tesla's patented radio devices had preceded Marconi's and that Tesla is officially the father of radio.

Tesla also created the first remote control device, which he demonstrated by directing a small battery-powered toy boat through various maneuvers on a lake as newspaper reporters looked on. He also designed a torpedo for use in warfare that was remotely controlled.

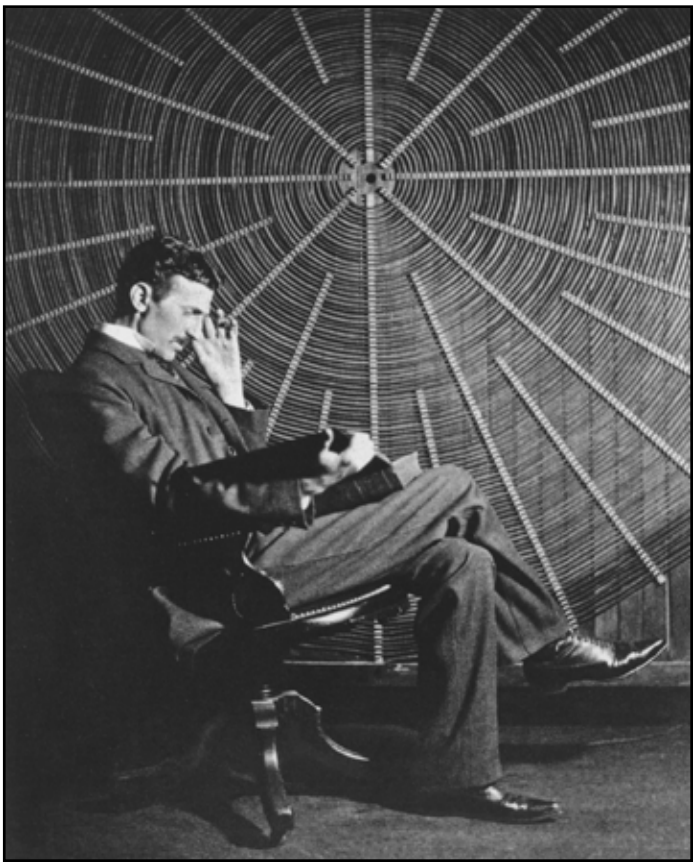
It was while working on a radio receiver designed to monitor thunderstorms that Tesla stumbled onto something quite extraordinary.

"Tesla thought that possibly he had received a radio signal from outer space that could conceivably be from extraterrestrials," Swartz said. "Which is a pretty amazing concept for his time. People in that era speculated that there could be life on Mars, but nobody suggested it too seriously. Tesla was conducting experiments in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1899, with a pretty good-sized radio receiver, because he was fascinated by the way lightning played in thunderstorms. He was trying to come up with a way to harness the power from thunderstorms.

"And one evening he received what he called 'regular signals.' You know, like beep, beep, beep. Not the usual static you hear from thunderstorms and lightning," Swartz continued. "He wondered at the time if he wasn't listening to 'one planet greeting another,' as he put it. From that point on, it became somewhat of an obsession of his to build better and better radio receivers to try to see if he could repeat what he heard. He got to the point where he claimed that he was actually receiving voice transmissions. He said it sounded just like people talking back and forth to each other. He made notes saying that he was actually hearing intelligent beings from another planet talking to each other, although he didn't know what language they were speaking. But he still felt he understood them."

An interesting point that should be made here is that at the time Tesla was hearing these alien voices through his primitive radio equipment, 1899, the country had just experienced the great Airship Wave of the late 1800s. No less a UFO expert than researcher and historian, Dr. David Jacobs believes that is when true UFO contact first began, in the skies over America, when people familiar only with hot air balloons as real-life flying devices began to see metal ships that flew over their homes and farmland, abducting the occasional cow and speaking to bewildered farmers in languages beyond their understanding.

While one hesitates to abandon the more familiar



**Did aliens have some kind of part in leading Tesla to create what he did?**

Ancient Astronauts theory that says alien contact began with mankind's birth in prehistoric times, Jacobs' belief does tend to support what Tesla claims happened to him.

This also begs the question: Did aliens have some kind of part in leading Tesla to create what he did? It is argued in the controversial book *The Day After Roswell*, by the late Colonel Philip Corso and his collaborator Bill Birnes, that recovered alien technology was reverse-engineered and used to lay the groundwork for numerous inventions, including fiber optics and much else in the way of technology we take for granted today.

One sometimes wonders if the aliens more likely are implanting the seeds for, or even directly "inspiring," through some process of implanted thoughts, some of the marvels of the current age.

In any case, there is likely some kind of overlap here between Tesla's voice contact and the inventions that came later, though it is of course impossible to prove. Tesla felt the voices were slowly preparing mankind for conquest and domination. In *The Lost Journals of Nikola Tesla*, Swartz goes on to recount the spine-tingling chronology of Tesla's battle with these aliens he believed to be an enemy race, all set against a background of industrial

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espionage and governmental secrecy that would make for a crackerjack science fiction tale were it not for the fact that the events are alleged to be completely real.

Tesla later went public with his claim that he was receiving extraterrestrial voice transmissions and was subjected to the usual humiliating ridicule that greets UFO witnesses today when they try to speak openly of their experiences. But he remained firm in his conviction that the voices were genuine and posed a terrifying threat to life on Earth as we know it.

TESLA LATER WENT PUBLIC WITH HIS CLAIM THAT HE WAS RECEIVING EXTRATERRESTRIAL VOICE TRANSMISSIONS ...

Global Communications publisher Tim Beckley provided more input on the connection between Tesla and UFOs.

"There are many who believe that Tesla was actually a 'star child' of sorts, that he was born on another planet and left on the doorstep of his adoptive parents," Beckley said." This speculative theory was first offered in a long out-of-print book by Margaret Storm and a later book by our own Commander X titled *Nikola Tesla: Free Energy and the White Dove*.

"The idea that Tesla was born off-planet seems to have originated with a gentleman named Otis T. Carr," Beckley continued. "A Baltimore MD and inventor, Carr claims that he worked side-by-side with Tesla for years and that he discovered bits and pieces of the great inventor's life that no one else knew about, including the fact that Tesla wasn't originally from 'here.'"

According to Beckley, Carr later went on to invent a saucer-shaped device that he said for a mere $14 million would take us to Mars or somewhere else nearby in the solar system.

"Carr was a controversial figure in his own right, but no one has been able to prove that he didn't work with Tesla in Manhattan, where Tesla was living in the New Yorker Hotel near Herald Square," Beckley added. "We do know that Tesla was fascinated with the possibility of life on other planets."

Beckley reiterated Swartz's statements regarding Tesla's attempts to establish contact with the aliens via radio.

"And he might have been successful in reaching out to the stars," Beckley said. "Furthermore, Tesla is said to have even developed a 'Tesla Scope' that anyone could use to make contact with extraterrestrials. The device was on display in Canada for several years before its owner passed away."

Now a few words about the title of Swartz's book. Tesla died in 1943 in poverty and relative obscurity. As he moved from hotel to hotel, staying one step ahead of his debts, he often left behind whole suitcases full of notes and diagrams for unfinished inventions. Legend has it that after he died, the federal government stepped in and confiscated the material, believing it contained designs for new weapons devices and therefore were relevant to national security.

But, apparently, a few things slipped through the fingers of the government. At a 1976 auction in Newark, New Jersey, a collector named Dale Alfrey bought four boxes of papers for around $25. Alfrey at first thought he had purchased the notes of a science fiction writer and had no idea of the importance of what the boxes contained. Twenty years would pass before Alfrey began to actually read the material and to try to preserve the badly mildewing papers by scanning them into his computer. While he was absorbed in this effort, he was visited by a trio of Men In Black (MIB) who looked to him like "undertakers." They offered to buy the papers from Alfrey, who replied that they weren't for sale.

After further discussion, which included some disturbing threats from the MIBs, the three visitors turned in unison and walked away. Alfrey felt himself to be regaining consciousness after being in a kind of trance. When he rushed back inside, the papers were gone, and so was the hard drive to his computer. He never completely recovered from the experience with the MIBs, but he did retain enough of what he had read of Tesla's lost journals to be sufficient for Swartz's book. Meanwhile, newspaper accounts from the time of Tesla's death related that a dozen large boxes of Tesla's notes may still be unaccounted for, perhaps waiting to be rediscovered and give up their secrets in our time.

This newly revised and expanded second edition of *The Lost Journals of Nikola Tesla* by Tim R. Swartz also contains new chapters on time travel, alternative energy, and Nazi flying discs, all of which help to expand the range and depth of the legacy Tesla has left to us to assist in our 21st Century groping for technological mastery of our world.

If we ever learn to travel in time or to take our energy directly from the forces animating the Universe or even to slip the surly bonds of Earth in a disc-shaped craft of human design, our debt to Nikola Tesla can only increase.

**Suggested Reading**

- *The Lost Journals of Nikola Tesla, Updated Edition*
- *Nikola Tesla: Free Energy and the White Dove*
- *Nikola Tesla's Death Ray and the Columbia Space Shuttle Disaster, Updated Edition* ◆

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# Flying Horror of New Guinea

BY MATTY SWEENEY, MARVELS AND THE MACABRE WITH MATTY

Papua New Guinea's remote and unexplored volcanic region is often referred to as the "Lost World," and new species of animals are being found on the island regularly. It is here that cryptozoologists believe one of the most dangerous and mysterious cryptids may reside, as reports of a large-winged creature have terrorized natives since the 16th Century.

In 1944, an American fighter pilot by the name of Duane Hodgekinson reported observing a strange bird-like creature taking off from a clearing in a jungle in Papua New Guinea. His claims that he saw a pterodactyl, a creature that is supposed to have died out 65 million years ago with the dinosaurs, was met with scorn and ridicule.

**What Is the Ropen?**

However, since the end of WWII, there have been more than a dozen sightings of what local tribes have named "The Demon Flyer" or Ropen, a creature that is, in virtually every encounter, described as having "featherless, leathery skin, a large crested head that resembles a spike, and a beak with razor-sharp teeth."

The creature is almost always said to have a wingspan of more than 30 feet, and some reports indicate that it may have an ability to emit a bioluminescent light from its body, like fireflies do.

The creature is said to be nocturnal and has been known to attack and possibly kill human beings.

Natives also believe the creature is a spirit that dwells in the mountains and eats the flesh of the dead by digging up newly deceased villagers' graves.

Every expedition to the island has yielded fascinating discoveries of new species of creatures, from insects to marine and bird life. Many biologists believe that reports

**The Ropen is described as having featherless, leathery skin, a large crested head that resembles a spike, and a beak with razor-sharp teeth.**

of the creature may be misidentifications of a yet unknown species of large bat. However, like the natives in the Congo, locals here have picked out pictures of flying dinosaurs rather than bats or birds when shown pictures of known animals.

So, once again, the question is posed: Have dinosaurs managed to survive a purported extinction event that possibly occurred 65 million years ago?

Many believe that if any dinosaurs were to have survived, the flying reptiles would be the ones to have done so. Pterosaur fossils are rare and have been found all over

**The Ropen is said to resemble a pterosaur. (Above is an artist's depiction of a living pterosaur.)**

the world, and the fossil record shows that over millions of years these creatures evolved from small, winged creatures to larger animals in size and weight — and were still evolving at the time of their supposed extinction.

There is no indication, however, from the fossil record that these creatures were able to transmit any kind of bioluminescent energy or light.

### Are We Still Sharing the World With Ancient Dinosaurs?

The creatures survived all three major periods of dinosaur reign on the planet, and many cryptozoologists believe that they have survived to this day and age, hiding in the remoteness of New Guinea.

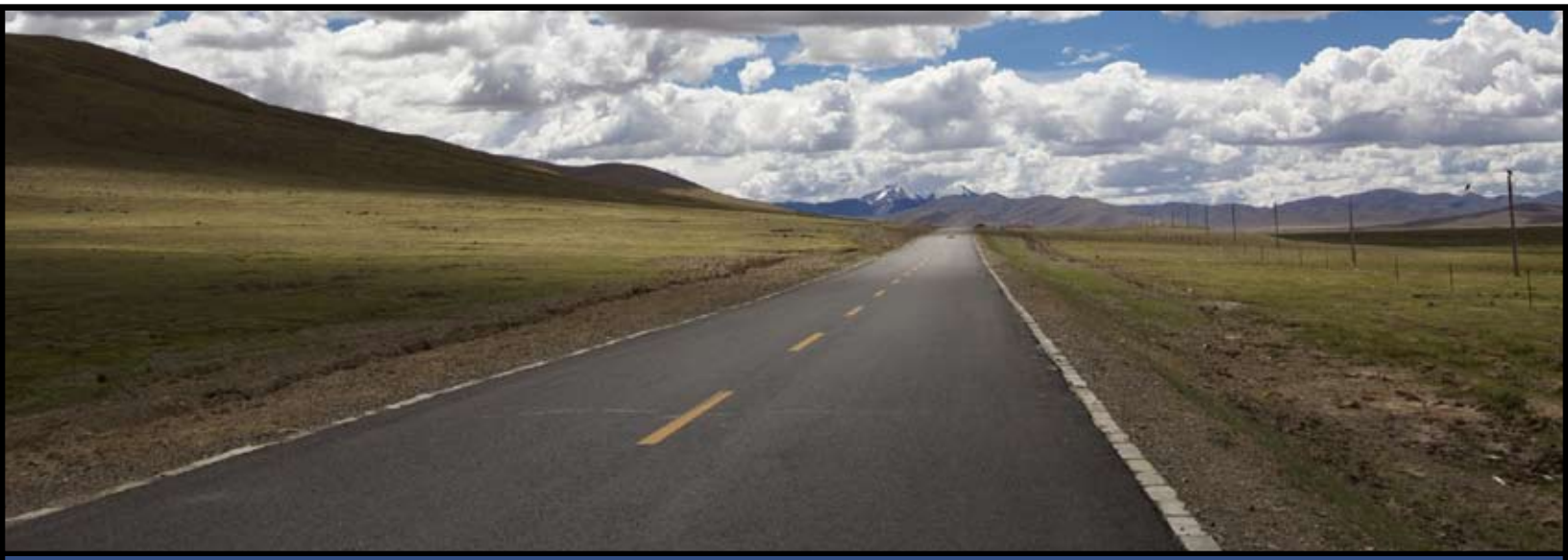
However, there is no physical or video evidence to support this, only anecdotal, and while many treks have been made in pursuit of the Ropen, nothing has been brought back.

In 1986, a man was said to have been killed by the Ropen near a former military base. The creature is said to have snatched the man up, flown 40 feet off the ground, and dropping the poor guy, either killing or incapacitating him. Then the creature picked him up, flew into a nearby tree, and ate the man in front of his fellow villagers!

Are we still sharing the planet with huge-sized reptiles once thought to be the dominant species before something occurred and was said to have caused their mass extinction?

If so, could huge flying reptiles still be flying the skies and perhaps be the cause of some human disappearances?

And if these creatures are able to emit their own light, are they perhaps responsible for some UFO sightings at night? ◆

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# Encountering Cryptids on an Empathic Level

BY RAINBOW RADAELLI, WWW.TRUTHSEEKERHIGHWAY.COM

Within the topic of cryptozoology, sometimes the paranormal and high strangeness of life has a way of evading the conventional approach of researchers. Sometimes we have to bring out our resourceful instincts to construct idiosyncratic methods in order to achieve the results we are seeking.

Eyewitness accounts and stories hold a certain amount of truth needed to piece together the universal puzzle that is scattered across the void. However, truth seekers who search for the answers come across what I call the needle in the haystack of needles quandary. There seems to be pieces that give the illusion that they fit together, but, ultimately, if the shapes are askew even slightly, the outcome won't connect the dots or remotely resemble the expected conclusion.

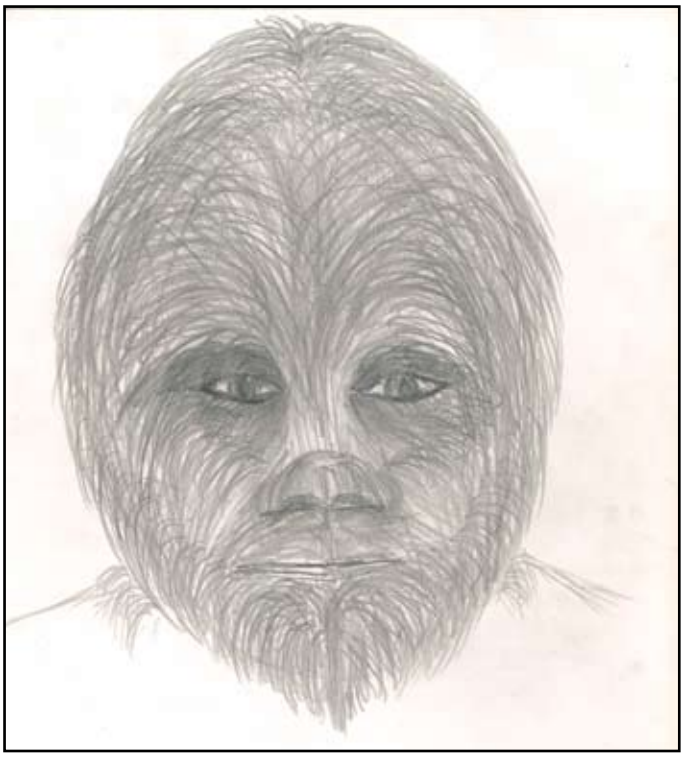
Maybe empathic correlation isn't as farfetched as some might believe, and maybe it just might be the solution that clarifies how some of the dots are connected and why they don't fit in certain areas.

Sasquatch and Dogman accounts have been a major source of intrigue that seem to have peaked to a new high within the past 20 years. Radio, podcasts, and YouTube videos have made it so much easier to share stories that would not have been heard otherwise. I have listened to many and found there are similarities to each, almost as if the same creatures visited them all.

Research is vital in all these instances, but what if there is more to the story, like a semblance of some type of dialogue that happens on another level. Is this admissible to any research? And what if it changes the dynamics of what shows itself on the surface as evidence?

The big question is: How does a person who is an empath play into cryptozoology? As an empath myself, the only way I can explain our role in the cryptid phenomenon is kind of like being a backstage messenger.

Cryptids respond more so to empaths because we can feel their presence while communication is happening in the moment. The validation for most empaths comes from feeling and sensing the presence of an unidentified creature while communicating with it. The question is, how does an empath validate his or her communication without people thinking they are frauds or making it up?



**Rainbow drew the illustration above of one of the cryptids that she is in contact with (Loekey, an Oregonian Sasquatch) so people would know what he looks like.**

In the back of an empath's mind, the variable conundrum is either figuring out if they should say what they know or keep quiet. The negative side effects from a backlog of information sometimes can be equivalent to a dam ready to burst open. It eventually becomes hard to mind the doors because scattered memories can blur the senses into a spiraling abysmal black hole. The library of the mind has to figure out how to dispose of undisclosed dialogues. Writing does

help, but sometimes imparted dialogues of high strangeness need to be shared.

For many people, the very idea of interacting with cryptids seems as farfetched as talking with aliens, but then we are dealing with two very different kind of species, one that hides away from humans and the other that prefers to hide in plain sight of humans.

How does any communication make sense? Sometimes for the empath, it doesn't. We don't sit down and ask questions — doing so wouldn't be realistic, especially with the reality of who cryptids are. They are a varied species that have a very different modus operandi than humans that is all their own. The biggest mistake for any of us is to put a human slant on their way of existence.

Some contacts give me jumbled words that I have to put together. Others will show me images of places in order to convey their messages to me.

In today's day and age, people want photos, videos, footprints, and face-to-face contact that far exceed what society wanted a hundred years ago. The darkness doesn't appear quite as ominous as it did because people are equipped with a fortitude that comes from a fanatic kind of interest.

Yet, I have found that no matter what video or article is out there, including images of Sasquatch, Dogman, or other cryptids, the debunkers come out in droves to disprove any findings as fake. Researchers are between a rock and a hard place because enthusiasts and the doubters want hard-pressed facts revealing the truth on cryptids packaged in a way that is convenient to look at and easily swallowed. What if the truth people seek is right in front of them yet they can't see it?

Empaths can easily become target practice for the doubting-Thomas types, because the evidence of information can be seen as hearsay or speculation rather than a verbatim portrayal. Gathered information with corroborative sightings and stories that are verified by witnesses seems to be the only way that empaths can prove that what they hear from specific contacts is true. Believe it or not, we need proof too.

Sometimes as an empath, I am befuddled as to why I am contacted because I can only assume there are others more suited for their purpose. To be clear, I was not interested in Sasquatch or Dogman in my past. I knew about them and respected their existence but left that field of research for those who were more interested in it.

I was told by two cryptids, a Sasquatch named Loekey and a Dogman named Tulack, that one of the reasons why they chose me is because I have nothing to prove or gain from their contact.

Interestingly enough, I find these contacts do affect me even in the smallest of ways. I can sometimes smell them in the room with me. I will get a low hum in one or both ears that slowly crescendos to a point that becomes deafening. Tingly feelings up and down my legs, not necessarily down my spine, let me know someone wants to communicate.

If I can feel a presence around me, I will either allow the information to come through or I block it, which can be draining. Sometimes they don't like waiting and become impatient in unpleasant ways. Headaches or a smarting jab to various parts of my body will indicate that they want my attention. In their case, patience is not a virtue.

The subconscious mind seems to have a waiting list of eager contacts that are standing by for the very moment an empath opens up. I have often wondered if we have some brand or invisible mark that separates us from the general populace. The question is, how do they find us?

I've waited until now to voice my opinion on cryptids because I believe these beings are a lot more intelligent than what some want to believe. When they contact me, I don't hear grunts, growls, or howls. If I did, the fight or flight impulse would kick in and I would probably jump out of my skin or pass out from fear.

Some contacts give me jumbled words that I have to put together. Others will show me images of places in order to convey their messages to me. The words they speak to me, beyond a doubt, are spoken with my inner voice, but the information isn't mine, it's foreign to me.

Sometimes I am awoken in the wee hours of the morning with a nonstop dialogue taking place, almost as if someone else is using my mind like a typewriter. In other instances, I will be doing housework or errands when information starts coming through. It just depends when the contact takes place.

To make it clear so that it doesn't seem like I don't understand the gravity of seeing cryptids in their habitat, I have worked cattle in Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Old Mexico. I have been in their domain most of my life, and I fully understand the severity of some people's encounters with some of them. I, on the other hand, was left to my own devices in my early years. Now, it's a different story.

For those people who think all contact is demonic, I must tell you that there are so many different types of beings out in the world who have nothing to do with the darkness. Our souls know the difference between a dark or light presence. If something comes around me that is dark, I am on my guard and I ask for protection.

From my perspective, the contacts seem to be more spirited and insistent these past few years. It's almost like a cosmic wave of an immeasurable depth is flowing in and out of my subconscious like a rhythmic tide.

The cryptids I have encountered seem to need a human voice to tell their stories. An empath hears the ebb and flow of voices, yet we don't judge what we hear. I only ask that those who read or hear what an empath reiterates from these creatures does so with an open mind before jumping the gun to come to conclusions and deciding what is true and what is false. Remember, sometimes truth is stranger than fiction only because we don't meet it as often. ◆

# The Invitation

By Karen Frazier

It's 3:15 AM when one of the dog barks and wakes me up. *Oh great*, I think. *Here we go again — another middle of the night wake-up when I can't get back to sleep.*

But then something happens. As I lie in bed surrounded by dogs and with Jim snoring gently next to me, instead of fighting to get back to sleep, I realize I am in a warm cocoon of love — surrounded in that moment only by people and creatures I love who love me. There are worse places to be at 3:15 AM, even when you aren't asleep.

I allow that love, and I truly feel it there so early in the morning. I float in it, and it is peaceful, warm, and beautiful. My early wake up, then, wasn't an annoyance at all. It was an invitation to experience moments of pure bliss and of the joy of being.

On Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, I became aware of severe shoulder pain whenever I moved my arm into a certain position. It was the kind of pain that catches you quickly and takes your breath away, and it made me careful in the way I moved my arm so as not to invoke the pain.

Although the pain was still there yesterday morning, I went to my Nia class, figuring I could just be a one-armed dancer for the day. When I got there, however, my painful shoulder invited me to explore movement and seek the pleasure.

And so, throughout class, I gently moved and found the places where my shoulder was not only not in pain, but it actually felt good. By the end of class, my shoulder was pain-free, and I could move it in every direction freely, joyfully, and comfortably.

We all have these things that come up in our lives. Some are inconveniences. Some are downright painful. Some are illnesses that linger. Some are relationships that break, people who are mean, bills that are unexpected and difficult to pay, appearance issues that keep us from loving our bodies, and losses of people we love ... the list goes on and on.

These things sometimes keep us from doing what we think we truly want to do. But what if these things aren't there to make life more difficult and painful? What if they exist and come into our lives as invitations to grow, explore, be, and immerse ourselves more fully in the beauty and joy of life?

What if that winter storm that keeps you trapped in the house without electricity is really an invitation to snuggle up with loved ones without distraction?

What if that injury or illness is an invitation to slow down, pay attention, and partner with your body in ways that bring about more pleasure and fulfillment that help you to nourish and nurture yourself and allow you to grow in spirit?

What if that horribly mean person is really just an invitation to experience yourself as one who forgives and loves unconditionally?

What if that 3 AM wake-up from the crying baby, child with a nightmare, or noisy pet is an invitation to experience a moment of pure peace and love with the child or pet when there are no other distractions?

What if that world leader who so terrifies you is really offering an invitation to define who you are and what you stand for? Or offering an invitation to find ways to bring more light to the planet?

What if that abusive person from your past is actually inviting you to overcome hardship and live in the light?

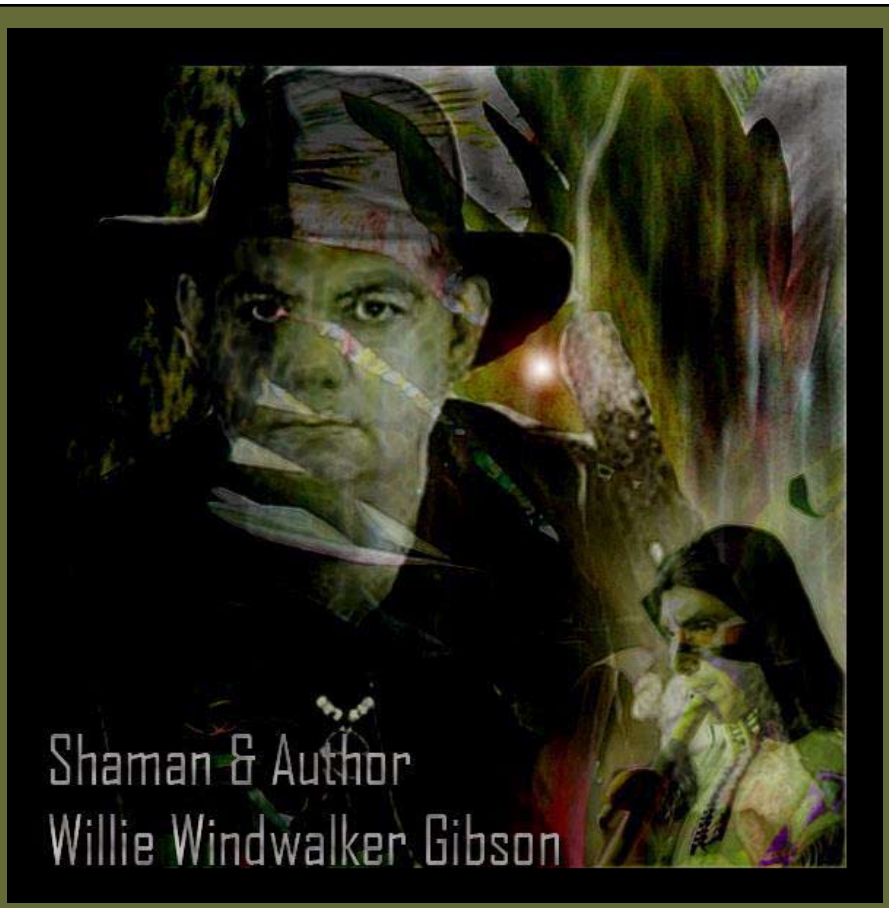
What if that environmental or weather disaster is an invitation to tread more lightly on the Earth and truly connect to a love of the planet?

What if the extra weight on your butt and around your middle is there as an invitation to love yourself unconditionally and treat yourself more kindly?

The "shadows" are full of invitations. They exist all around you in every second of every day. They are there, these invitations, in the appropriateness of all things, and it is often in the hardships where the greatest invitations lie.

The Universe is inviting you to compassionate action, greater peace, more joy, unconditional love, partnership with the planet and your body, deeper connection, and faith, and so much more, if only you'll allow it.

Are you listening to the Universe? ◆

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# OUIJA: AN ATTACHMENT

By Willie Windwalker Gibson

A lot of people ask me what tools I use as a shaman. I tell them the most powerful tool I have is faith in the all mighty great spirit God. I also tell them I use what God provides for me, such as sage, crystals, herbs, holy water, salt, and lavender, as well as a few other tools.

I am often also asked if I use the Ouija board. I tell them that I have been trained on the board, but I do not use it. Why? The answer is simple. By using a Ouija board, there is a danger of letting in "something" you can't get rid of.

I'd like to share a story with you to illustrate this point.

* * * * *

It was summer 2010. I got a call from a woman — let's call her Rachel. She told me she was having problems in her home. Specifically, things were being thrown at her, she heard disembodied voices, and she had seen large shadow figures in the basement of the house.

Rachel said she was afraid for eight-year-old son, as well as herself. I told Rachel that I would be over the next day to interview her.

* * * * *

The next morning I arrived at Rachel's house. I immediately had an eerie feeling when I walked up to the house. I felt a heaviness, and I got a sick feeling in my stomach.

I rang the doorbell a few times until the door finally opened. There stood a tiny woman about five feet tall and about 100 pounds. She had blonde hair and green eyes and looked to be in her early 30s. I asked her if she was Rachel, and she shook her head yes. I introduced myself to her, and she let me in. Right away the negativity surrounded me. I could feel that I was unwanted there.

We went into the kitchen and sat down. I asked Rachel what was going on. Once again she told me of the activity in the house and said it was getting worse. She said she was now being touched sexually. Right away I knew this was big trouble. I asked Rachel if her son had been touched as well? She said he had not, as of yet, been touched, but he was scared to sleep in his room.

**One of the original Oujia boards created in 1891 from Kennard Novelty Company.**

I asked her the standard questions about drug and alcohol use, and she said there was none. Then I asked Rachel if she had been involved with any paranormal activities, like ghost hunting. She said she had done so as a teenager but not since then.

I asked her what she had done involving the paranormal as a teenager, and she said her and some girlfriends used to talk with a Ouija board. She went on to say that talking with the board was fun for awhile, but then it got scary and they quit.

I asked Rachel, how long had it been since the last use of the Ouija board. She said at least 15 years. I asked Rachel how her friends were doing? She told me two had been divorced several times, and a third friend committed suicide. Rachel herself was divorced and couldn't have a relationship that lasted.

* * * * *

Rachel then gave me a tour of the house. We started walking from room to room. Each room of the house had a dark residual energy in it, like glue sticking to everything. Then Rachel took me to the basement, which was a downstairs apartment with a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bathroom.

The basement was dark. I turned on the lights, and right away I saw a large mirror on the wall about three feet tall. I asked Rachel about the mirror, and she told me it was her grandmother's.

I started walking through the basement apartment, about halfway through, the lights started flickering. I could see a large black mass start forming like a tornado. It started moving, coming at me. I told Rachel to back away and go back upstairs.

As the mass got closer, I took a vile of blessed salt from my medicine bag and threw it at the mass. It started backing away, and I went back upstairs and joined Rachel. I told Rachel it was my conclusion that she probably released the dark entity in the basement while using the Ouija board as a teenager. I also told her the entity had attached itself to her and her friends, causing them pain and even death in the case of her friend committing suicide.

Rachel asked me what should be done. I told her that I was going to do a clearing in the house and then the basement apartment. I told her to follow me through the house as I cleared the upstairs rooms. And when I was done clearing the upstairs, I did a blessing with holy water and then cleared and blessed Rachel.

Rachel's son was due home from school in an hour, so I told Rachel I would clear and bless him then.

* * * * *

I then went to the basement to confront the black entity. I got to the bottom of the stairs, and the lights started flickering again. I lit my white sage stick and started walking through the apartment chanting native prayers. The smoke was thick in the air. I then started chanting the Lord's Prayer.

It was then that the entity manifested itself right in front of me. The smoke was billowing high and thick. I started backing away as the entity came at me. I could feel the energy starting to get lighter. I found myself standing in front of the mirror that Rachels' grandmother gave her.

I chanted the Lord's Prayer louder and louder. The entity was now in front of the mirror. I then said, "Be gone. Go back to where you came from now!"

The entity went into the mirror.

I quickly took a vile of holy water out of my medicine bag, splashed the mirror with it, and blessed it in the name of Jesus Christ. I yelled for Rachel to bring me a blanket. I took the mirror down from the wall and placed the blanket over it.

I asked Rachel if I could take the mirror out of the house. Rachel told me that if it would get rid of her problems I could take it. I took the mirror from the house and placed it in my car. I then went back inside the house to wait for Rachel's son to get home.

When he arrived, I saged and blessed him. Then I went back through the house and saged and blessed it again, as well as the basement.

The house was cleared, and it felt lighter and more like a home. Rachel asked me what I was going to do with her grandmother's mirror. I told Rachel that the entity had gone into the mirror for refuge. It was trapped. I told Rachel that I had to put the mirror in a hollowed spot. She told me to do it.

I got into my car and drove the mirror to an old cemetery at the edge of town. I took the mirror and buried it deep. I then did a prayer at the burial site and left.

I went back to Rachel's house and did a walk-through. I felt the house was cleared for good. I told Rachel that she had her life back.

This story is true except for Rachel's real name. I always tell people that Ouija boards are dangerous and not just a game. My opinions are based on actual personal experiences, like the one with Rachel. ◆

# Getting Back to Good:
## Healing the New Age Way

By Krystle Vermes, www.getspooked.net

Over-the-counter medicine, such as aspirin, can take care of everyday aches and pains — but what about the ones that won't go away? In an era of political turmoil and global tension, we're all under stress.

Now, many people are turning to New Age healing methods to relieve some of the pressure, but does it really work? What do you really need to get through the day — and life — in this crazy world?

### 'Misery Loves Company'

Even if you aren't exposed to negative people and environments daily, it's important to note that negative energy can attract similar energies.

"In today's world, I feel that there is yin-yang energy, and it is breaking people open," said Dallisa Hocking, psychic and meditation teacher. "We are each dealing with our own vulnerabilities, clearing out our own stagnant energy. During this process of breaking open, some people are leaning in toward the light, while others are in a negative spiral."

Those who are in a negative mind-frame may also be bringing down the rest of us, according to author Candace Talmadge. "So many people stagger around aching and hurting and intentionally or not, they inflict that pain on others," said Talmadge. "Misery loves company."

But not all of us are ignorant of the impact our pessimism has on everyday life. Many people feel the negativity, and they want to do something to cleanse themselves. Insert the healers of our modern age. They use a wide range of tools to help their clients feel rejuvenated.

### Removing Unseen Barriers

Many healers believe there are negative energies that act as "blockages" to the good in our environment. If we can move them out of the way, we can start feeling better.

"Part of taking on new students is transmitting my Qi (life force) to assist in unblocking their energy meridians," said Jess Wilson, a California-based Qigong teacher. "These are the same meridians that are used in acupuncture for better health."

Atherton Drenth, a clairvoyant and medical intuitive, also believes that negative energy can be a barrier. "I assist the body's energy field back to regaining health by releasing the blockage," she explained. "The body is very wise and knows exactly what it needs in order to heal and balance."

However, some healers believe that there are underlying issues that need to be addressed aside from energy barriers. More specifically, this is where New Age and paranormal beliefs come into play.

### Past Lives and Present-Day Stress

Could the anxieties and events we faced in past lives be responsible for the negative energy we feel today? Michelle Brock, a New York-based spiritual development life coach who specializes in past life regression, said she's seen it

first-hand. In one case, she met a 30-year-old woman with post-traumatic stress disorder who was having difficulty overcoming the symptoms in her everyday life.

"When she relaxed she found herself in a past life in the Middle Ages as a woman who was about to give birth," said Brock. "She recalled an emotional past life in which she died while giving birth and was beside herself at having to leave her two other young children behind. I guided her through the process of her death, and all of the grief and emotion that she felt during it, and then helped her to release this energy from her past that she had carried with her into this life."

After the session, the woman's PTSD vanished, and she was able to return to enjoying her own life and family.

In another instance, Brock met a 50-year-old man who had broken his back several times in the same spot.

"I guided him to a state of deep relaxation, where he experienced a past life as a little girl — about eight years old — who lived in the Oklahoma Territory in the 1800s," she explained. "He described a scene that seemed like a land race, where settlers could stake a claim on plots of land that they got to first, and during the scuffle of wagons and horses, [she] had gotten separated from her parents. [She] was trampled to death by horses, breaking her back in the same spot he had. ... I helped guide him through his death and also helped him to release these emotions that he had been carrying with him energetically from this past life that was manifesting itself as a physical symptom in his back."

Brock seemingly has the tools, energy, and knowledge to help those who are holding onto negative energy that may be presenting itself today. But what if our feelings cannot be traced back to the past?

### Finding Time to Heal

Feeling better and healing on the inside can be as easy as giving yourself the opportunity to do so.

"I recommend to everyone I work with to meditate at least a little every day," said Sam Liebowitz, a New York-based wellness consultant. "Ten minutes of just paying attention to your breath, being present with yourself, and letting the thoughts just come and go does wonders for your mood throughout the day."

And, of course, practice makes perfect.

"Find a simple practice that brings you within yourself each day, whether it's sitting in silence in the body for five minutes every morning and making a commitment to doing that every day at the same time," said spiritual author Adrian Clarke.

Keep in mind that there are some things that *do* require attention from a medical professional. Before trying alternative forms of healing, consult your physician for insight into all of your options.◆

# WHAT IS POPPET MAGIC?

**By Winter M. Balefire, www.WinterBalefire.com**

Poppets are used in a type of spellwork called sympathetic magic. The belief behind sympathetic magic is that you can affect a person by performing magical workings on something that represents them.

A poppet is a figure that represents a person or animal you wish to help or heal with magic.

### Isn't a Poppet Just a Voodoo Doll?

Popular modern movies and television programs have done their part in portraying the use of poppets as "voodoo dolls" and therefore fanning the flames of fear and misinformation with this type of magic. The use of these dolls goes back much further than the roots of Voodoo. In fact, these dolls aren't really used in true Haitian Vodou at all.

Poppets can be traced as far back as ancient Egypt when several enemies of Ramses III used wax figures representing him to aid in causing his demise. In ancient Greece, these dolls were used to bind lovers together or to keep a spirit from causing harm. This concept is similar to West African Fetish magic when slaves coming into America brought these dolls, called fetishes, with them.

A fetish was believed to contain spirits connected to the person who owned the doll, and it would be worn as a talisman. Poppets are also used in Hoodoo, which is a type of folk magic not to be confused with the religion of Voodoo. Though "voodoo dolls" are popular in New Orleans, it is mostly a way to appease tourists.

**A poppet is a figure that represents a person or animal you wish to help or heal with magic. (Photo by Malcolm Lidbury, aka Pink pasty, via Wikimedia Commons.)**

### How Do You Make a Poppet?

There are many different ways to make a poppet. You can use cloth, wax, wood, clay, or even meat. If making one from fabric, you can use cotton or other bits of cloth or polyfill to stuff the doll, but be sure to leave room for the magic.

Keep in mind whatever your purpose is for creating the doll, and use whichever herbs or stones will help fuel your magical workings. Also, don't forget your taglock, which is the key item that will connect the poppet to whomever it is intended for. This can be hair, nail clippings, clothing, photographs, or anything else to create a strong link. These can go inside or outside of the doll.

Remember to incorporate colors that will help show your intent, including black for banishing, white for protection, blue for healing, orange for creativity, and so on.

Make the poppet appear as similar as possible to whomever it will be linked to. Make sure to have arms, legs, head, and torso. Keep in mind if this person has any tattoos, scars, or other distinguishing features that should be added to the doll for proper representation.

You can draw, paint, or etch a face, add any signs or symbols, especially astrological. The more you put into it, the more powerful it is believed to be. You are encouraged to speak during the preparations, speaking your intent and giving the doll its purpose.

**YOU CAN ALSO USE YOUR OWN POPPET TO HELP GET A JOB OR FURTHER YOUR CAREER.**

Poppets can also be made for animals as well; you'll just have to tweak the shape a bit.

**Can Poppets Be Harmful?**

Any type of magic can be harmful in the wrong hands. Poppets are meant to represent a particular being, so the thought of manipulating someone to your will is scary. The purpose is to help and heal. With any form of magic, the person should be aware that these workings are being performed with them in mind.

With that being said, I do not believe in using poppet magic for love or material gain. For example, you can make a poppet of yourself using a piece of sexy lingerie to help boost your confidence, which will help you find love in the long run. But, you should not make a poppet resembling a person you wish would fall in love with you, especially without them knowing.

You can also use your own poppet to help get a job or further your career, but do not make a poppet of your boss to try to get a raise.

These dolls work great for healing magic for a sick friend, family member, or pet. They also come in handy if you need a little extra protection or wish to banish any harm or gossip that may come your way.

**Take the Fear Out**

Poppets are a fun, creative project that you can use in your magical workings. Try to push aside all of the misconceptions that have come with these dolls over the centuries and see them for what they are: a tool, just like a dream pillow or protective amulet.

Your intent is key. Magic should never be used for harm. Remember that whatever you put forth will be returned to you.◆

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# Working in a Haunted Store:
## Communicating With the Ghost of Diana

**By Alan D.D., www.tintanocturna.blogspot.com**

Whenever someone thinks about ghosts, the most common thing is to imagine translucent human shapes or strange shadows we can briefly see. Haunted places are expected to be full of spiritual energy, unexplainable events, and many different scary sounds.

However, I worked in a haunted clothing store, and I can assure everyone that none of this is as we expect it to be — although, there were a few events that made it more interesting to be at work, and I miss that sometimes.

### The Story Behind "Diana"

A girl died 10 or 12 years ago in one of the biggest malls in my city. Her family was in the bank, when a large piece of glass fell from the ceiling and hit Diana. It killed her instantly. It was soon reported that Diana's spirit appeared and was heard in one of the stores in the mall. At the end of 2016, I worked at that store for a couple of months.

How do I know that this girl really existed? I talked with her using my tarot cards. Since it was a public place and I didn't have enough space, I simply told her my intentions and started to draw cards from my deck.

My coworkers called her "Diana," and that's the name I used while communicating with her. I made sure to be as respectful as possible during our communications, which is something I advise everyone to do when dealing with the dead: Do not ever be disrespectful. Be polite, and they will most likely be polite too.

When I would start my communication session with Diana when I was alone in the store, I would usually ask: "Diana, if you're here, give a sign." And sometimes I could feel a cold breeze come through and a little chill go down my spine.

### What's it Like to Be in a Store With a Ghost?

Diana never scared me. Sometimes, one of the caps on display would fall suddenly; other times a toy would fall, the door wouldn't open ... things like that.

**I spoke with Diana's spirit at this bench in the mall, where one of my coworkers was also able to feel her presence.**

Many times when those kind of things happened, I would say aloud, "Diana, come on girl, behave," half joking, half serious. But each time after saying it, nothing else unexpected happened that day.

I recognized Diana's presence and existence, but I also recognized that I was the one in charge of the store and the one who could send her away if I needed to.

There were never any scary happenings when I was working — no floating clothes, no ghostly visions — but there was something that happened one time, a simple but impressive event, that showed me that Hollywood's portrayal of ghosts may not always be that distant from reality.

One of my coworkers had the ability to hear to Diana. She often heard her when she went to the bathroom next to the store, and she felt her presence when she ate

**Diana used to play with the lights in this hallway at the mall.**

at a bench across from the store. One day that coworker and I were working with another coworker who didn't believe in Diana, but when the coworker came out of the improvised storage area in the store, she told us, "There's someone praying inside."

The storage area was the size of a small bathroom, but when we went in, the three of us could hear unintelligible words from a disembodied voice. Despite the music playing in the store, it was clear that we were not alone in that small space. The voice wasn't coming from behind the walls, the upper level of the mall, or anywhere else; it was inside that storage area. The phrase "It seemed to come from everywhere and nowhere at the same time" describes what happened in our case perfectly.

When I said I was going to turn off the music to hear what the voice was saying, it suddenly stopped. Despite our coworker not being a believer, she was completely shocked. We all started to laugh, amazed that we witnessed a kind of manifestation and because, deep inside, we were surprised that Diana had the ability to make her presence that clear.

**And Then …?**

For personal reasons, I had to change jobs and went to work at an office elsewhere. But, I had the opportunity to visit the clothing store recently, and one of my former coworkers told me something that left me thinking.

"Hey, since you left, nothing happened. Looks like she left with you," she told me, adding that she didn't think it was a coincidence that some appliances didn't work correctly for a few days after I left.

If anyone asks me, I think that Diana just wanted someone who wasn't afraid of her, someone she could talk to and even have some fun. What is more interesting and reaffirms my coworkers suggestion that my presence possibly influenced Diana's spirit to make itself known is that I am able to sense the dead if I focus myself in doing so.

When I tried to connect with Diana on my return visit to the store, she was gone, and I now like to think that she's finally resting in peace.

I'm not a medium. I'm not the male version of the *Long Island Medium*, Theresa Caputo, or *Ghost Whisperer's* protagonist, Melinda Gordon, or a long lost brother of the Halliwell sisters from *Charmed*. I am a practicing witch who likes to connect and help spirits trapped in this plane.

Would I do it again? Sure. Just as I like to help the living, I also like to help the dead. I know how to speak to them, understand them, and even try to help them, so if I ever come across another case like Diana's, I am more than willing to do reach out.◆

# A Haunting in Durhamville

**By Bob Fountain, www.SpectralTech.org**

On August 27, 2016, Spectral Tech began an investigation of a private residence located in Durhamville, Tennessee. This is an ongoing investigation that will likely involve future visits, and the following only reports what has been found to date ...

Durhamville is a rural unincorporated community in Lauderdale County, Tennessee. Located just seven miles south of Ripley, Tennessee, with a population of about 8,000, it is primarily farmland with houses and farms scattered throughout the area.

The investigation was prompted by a lead we had received by Spectral Tech members Scott and Lisa Oates. We contacted the client, John Elder, acquired some preliminary information over the phone, which was considered to warrant an investigation, and we set up a date for the initial investigation.

The house is set back off of and barely visible from the road, and is in a sparsely populated, wooded area on the outskirts of Ripley. It is a one-story house with a basement and attic. The primary living quarters are all located on the first floor, and the attic is empty and can only be entered by a pull-down ladder located in the bedroom off the kitchen. The basement is basically unfinished and has no power.

**A shadow figure has been seen in the basement of this Durhamville, Tennessee, home. Pictured above is the stairway leading to the home's basement.**

### The First Investigation

Our entire team arrived at the house at 8:30 p.m. Not knowing how big the house might be, we decided to break up into two teams to cover the house or let only one team investigate at a time if the house was small.

Upon arrival, we found that besides John Elder and his fiancée, Tiffany, there were several other people present, apparently interested in what paranormal investigators did. We quickly pointed out that a large crowd could easily compromise an investigation and that most of them

**This private residence in Durhamville, Tennessee, is the site of paranormal activity, including unexplained banging or knocking on the walls, footsteps in the attic, and doors opening and closing on their own.**

would have to stay quiet and assemble somewhere else during the investigation. Several of this group had experiences in the house, so we invited them to share their impressions with us before we began.

John informed us that he grew up in the house and his parents gave it to him to live in. John said there has always been activity in the house. From banging or knocking on the walls to the sound of walking in the attic. John's dogs frequently bark at something unseen in a room, and doors have opened and closed on their own. John's mother, who was also present when we arrived, verified many of these occurrences. We were told the house had been built on a site that had once been a community dump long ago.

When Tiffany moved into the house, the activity continued, but 10 of Tiffany's pets she brought along all died mysteriously. Tiffany also heard what sounded like a conversation about her that was going on behind her when she was working at the kitchen sink. She also said that both she and John had heard a child's toy in the bedroom, located off the kitchen, playing pop goes the weasel. They do not have any toys in their house, let alone anything that plays that song.

We began the investigation by doing a complete sweep of the house with K-II meters to pinpoint any location that had high EMF readings and any electronic devices that needed to be turned off.

The focus of the first investigation was the attic and main living quarters.

Several personal experiences resulted from the investigation, as well as direct responses on the K-II meters to questions asked and EVP responses.

Notable personal experiences included the sensing of a presence in the kitchen area as we discussed the activity in the house. Team members also heard someone walking in the empty attic. When one of our investigators went into the attic to investigate, he saw a self-illuminating orb midway in the attic that could not be explained.

**AN INVESTIGATOR SAW A SELF-ILLUMINATING ORB IN THE ATTIC ...**

The K-II meters went to red in response to several yes/no questions, such as, "Did you hurt the animals?"; "Were you killed and placed in the dump before the house was here?"; and "Is there more than one spirit here?"

Four EVPs were captured and analyzed. When we were asking questions about who was present and wanted to communicate, we got a female voice that sounded like it said, "Help us." We again got a female voice saying, "Help me" during the end of the of our EVP sessions. What sounded like "What happened?" was also captured.

Because of all the people in the house, we decided to end the investigation early and asked if John wanted us to return and further investigate. We encouraged them to keep a journal of what they felt was paranormal from

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**During an investigation of a residential home in Tennessee, the Spectral Tech investigators caught multiple EVPs, the sounds of disembodied footsteps, and an unexplainable orb of light in the attic.**

that point on. We decided to come back in a few weeks, which would give us time to review our data and develop a game plan for our next investigation.

Before we could set up a follow-up date, we received a call from John.

### 2nd Investigation

On September 8, 2016, I received a call from John asking if we could come right away because something new had happened. John said that the usual activity continued, but he said one night he was laying in his bed when he experienced what felt like a hand touch the back of his head. That had never happened before, and it disturbed him.

I contacted our team, and two members were available to return to the house on September 10. I called John and set a time and reminded him the fewer people there the better.

Upon arrival, John and his fiancée were present, as well as Virginia, a friend who was now staying at the house.

After we readied our equipment, team members Nick McDivitt and Micky Materna went into the attic again for an EVP session, as well as to see if the self-illuminating orb would manifest again, which it didn't.

The Boo Buddy, an interactive talking bear created specifically for paranormal investigation, was set up in the kitchen with a recorder placed nearby to capture any responses to questions being asked. The bear is filled with sensing devices to detect temperature and EMF fluctuations, and it also asks questions.

Again, we had several personal experiences and activity with the K-II meters and recorders during the investigation. Notable with this investigation was when Virginia came into the kitchen and sat down on a chair during the investigation and two of the K-II meters lit up and went to red. We moved them away from her, and they went off. When we moved them back to her, they went to red again. We asked if she had a cell phone, which could have set off the K-IIs, but she said she didn't.

A strong presence was felt when this was happening, and I asked it to move. While this was happening, the Boo Buddy was saying it was cold and it liked being tickled. This indicates that there is a noticeable temperature change and EMF activity present that was detected by the sensors in the Boo Buddy. Upon review of the recorder placed by the Boo Buddy during this incident, we got a male voice saying, "Toy, Toy, Toy" on the recorder.

Another notable incident was when I went into the attic to do a second EVP session with the rest of those present remaining in the living room. I climbed just to the

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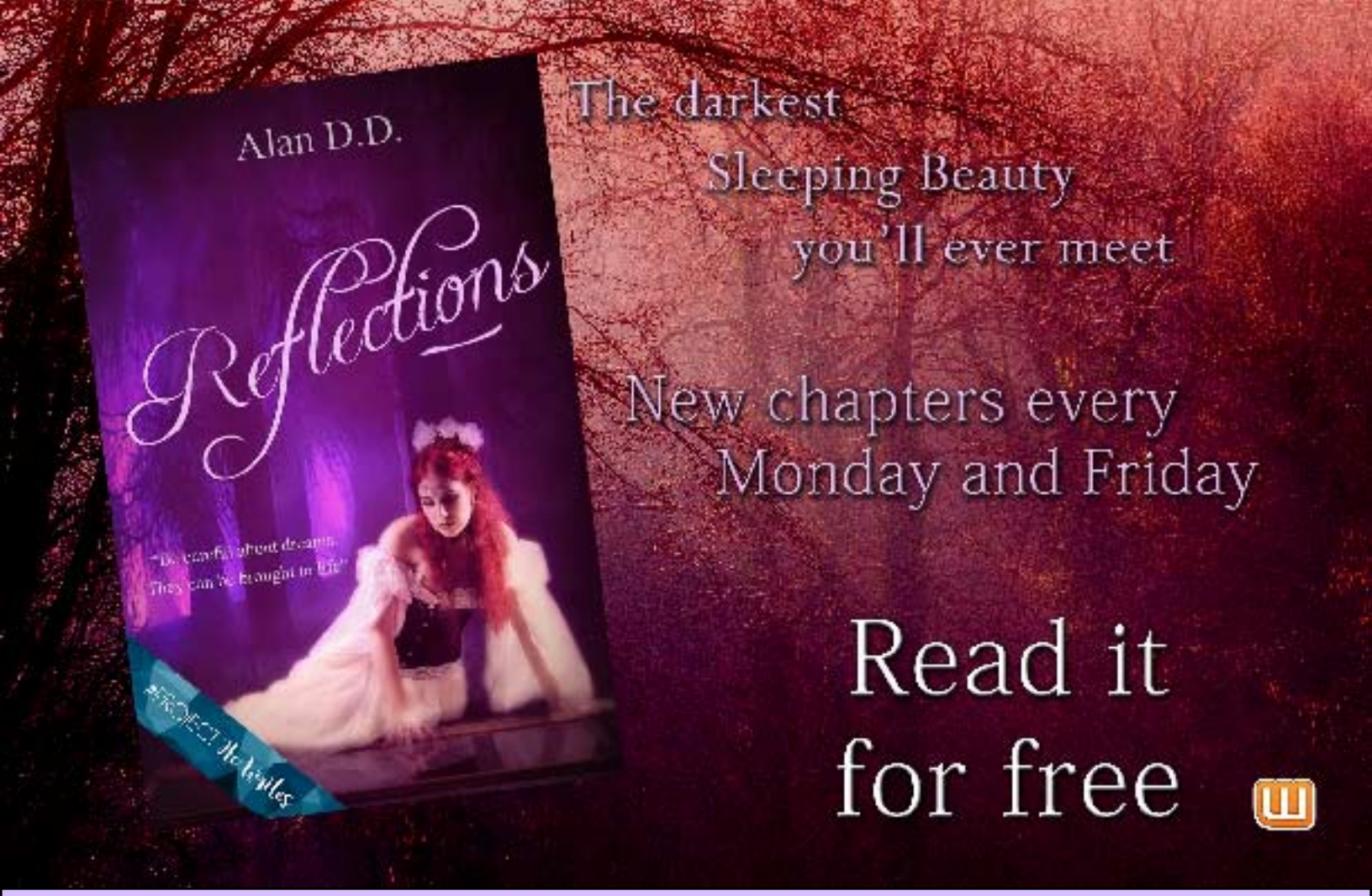


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top of the ladder to the attic and sat on the edge of the floor by the ladder to do the EVP session. When I asked if anyone wanted to communicate, an EVP was captured that said, "Come ahead."

The K-II meter went to red several times during this session. I asked several times if whoever was there wanted to cross over and got no response at all. As I was sitting at the top of ladder, the group downstairs in the living room said they thought I was walking around in the attic, because they could hear footsteps walking back and forth in the attic. I advised them that I never moved in the attic nor did I hear any footsteps. There is no ductwork in the attic for heat or air conditioning, so we ruled out ductwork as mimicking walking sounds.

**We have captured several EVPs with female voices saying, "Help us" and "Help me."**

One item they mentioned in passing at the end of our investigation was that they all had experienced scratches and bruises several times when they woke up in the morning. John showed me a scratch he had on his stomach that was several inches long. They had no explanation for how this happened but didn't think it was a big deal. I told them it really was a big deal.

When I mentioned that possible escalation was a possibility and a further reason to have the house cleansed, John declined, feeling that cleansing the house might make things worse.

On November 14, I gave John a follow-up call out of concern about the bruising and scratching. Tiffany answered the phone and told me that her friend Virginia had moved out and the bruising and scratches had stopped.

Although they seemed to think that whatever was causing the increased activity was attached to Virginia, the other possible explanation could be that the activity may have backed down because Virginia moved out but remains and is capable to resume at any time.

At the conclusion of the second investigation, John agreed we should continue with further investigations to find more about what is causing the activity. Again, we said we needed time to review the data we collected and would contact them to set up a time to review what we had found.

I suggested to John that he might want to consider having another paranormal group come in and either verify or dispute what we have found to this point. We never charge a client for our investigations nor do we attempt to tell them that we have all the answers. We just want our clients to find the answers they are seeking and another team might provide more insight as to what was happening. John just wanted to continue with our team.

**3rd Investigation**

During our third investigation, I went alone to discuss the results of our second visit. I was told that after Victoria had moved out a new couple had moved in and had already experienced paranormal activity.

The woman had woken up at around 2 a.m. and saw a child standing in the corner of their bedroom staring at her in a menacing manner. It disappeared as she tried to wake her husband. On another night in her bedroom, she also had seen a shadow figure materialize and dissipate.

Tiffany also said she had seen a shadow figure come toward her when she went into the basement one day.

**Initial Conclusions**

After reviewing notes, personal experiences, and sounds captured on EVPs, we have been able to make some initial conclusions. To date, from the data we have reviewed, we have determined that there is indeed paranormal activity in the house that cannot be explained.

The activity experienced does not appear to be residual, but it interacts by responding to questions asked, is willing to attempt to communicate, and has enough energy to activate K-II meters at will, as well as leave imprints on recorders. We have captured several EVPs with female voices saying, "Help us" and "Help me."

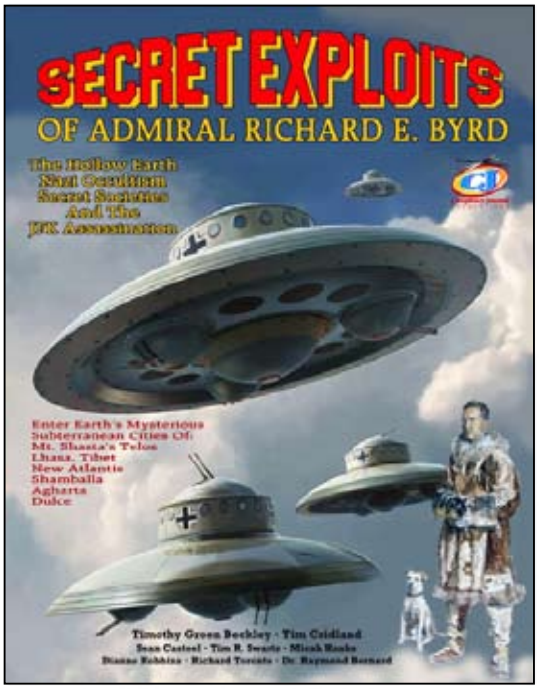
There is also a male voice that has answered questions about harming the animals. It is also possible that this male entity has trapped other spirits in the house with him. The positive response we got with the K-II when asked if the entity was killed and put in the dump furthers the possibility of an attachment to the land.

A pattern is also apparent. Negative activity has increased every time someone new has moved into this house. This provides us with a theory that whatever is causing the activity is either attached to the land or the house. Every time someone new moves into the house, it changes the energy environment of the house. Consequently, the entity does not like this and attempts to remove the source.

Just as we often feel uncomfortable in a waiting room when a stranger sits down next to us and we react to their energy, new people "invading" the space in this house elicits a response to what resides there. It cannot, or does not, want to leave but will take action on those who can leave.

Although John and Tiffany have grown accustomed to what is going on in their house and are not really bothered by it, I get the strong feeling that we will be hearing from them in the future. ◆

## DID ADMIRAL RICHARD E. BYRD LEAD A SECRET "PRIVATE LIFE" AWAY FROM THE PRYING EYES OF THE PUBLIC? WHAT WAS HIS ULTIMATE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY?




Several years ago a mysterious manuscript said to be Admiral Richard E. Byrd's Private Diary emerged. In it Byrd wrote about a vast ice free "paradise" beyond the Poles:

"We are crossing over the small mountain range and still proceeding northward as best as can be ascertained. Beyond the mountain range is what appears to be a valley with a small river or stream running through the center portion. There should be no green valley below! Something is definitely wrong and abnormal here! We should be over Ice and Snow! To the port side are great forests growing on the mountain slopes. Our navigation instruments are still spinning, the gyroscope is oscillating back and forth!"

During his career as an explorer, up until his death in March 1957, Byrd was considered a national hero. Besides exploring both Poles, it is alleged that the veteran Navy commander had come upon an entrance way that led into a Hollow Earth inhabited by a race of giants.

Rumor also has it that Byrd, during his 1947 expedition, was confronted by a "lost" Battalion of Nazis whose settlement was being guarded by a fleet of back engineered "Flying Saucers." And while Byrd's scientific team was supposed to stay for six months in this frozen region, his expedition was called off shortly after his arrival.

What is generally not known is that on one of Byrd's sojourns to Antarctica, he sought to stave off mutiny from among his crew by enlisting some of the younger members into a very secretive "Loyal Legion," which enabled him to clamp down on any leaks about his missions and discoveries.

And while the content of Byrd's "secret diary" is open to debate, researcher and author Tim Cridland searches deeply into the many shadowy unknowns surrounding Byrd and the Nazis as well as a previously undisclosed wrinkle: a closely guarded connection between JFK's assassination to the iron grip of those determined to keep the secrets surrounding UFOs and the arrival of ultra-terrestrials locked away from public scrutiny forever. This conspiracy involved members of a sinister secret group of wealthy and "well connected" individuals that included Lyndon Johnson, John Connelly and at least one member of Byrd's family among its ranks.

This book takes a wholly original approach to a great many areas of interest revolving around the concept that our Earth is "hollow," and that a vast cavern system, constructed eons ago, exists connecting various subterranean cities with their hidden gateways back to the surface world. Both benevolent beings as well as "denizens of the deep" are said to populate this hidden realm.

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# 'The World's Most Haunted Hospitals':

## By Richard Estep

Q&A by Michelle M. Pillow, MichellePillow.com

Paranormal reality author Richard Estep has been investigating the paranormal for more than 21 years on both sides of the Atlantic. Some of his most interesting cases have been filmed for the TV series *Haunted Case Files*, which airs on the Destination America network.

He works as a paramedic and currently lives in Colorado with his wife, a dog, and four rescued black cats.

*In Search of the Paranormal* was the first volume of his autobiography, covering some of his favorite cases from both Britain and the United States. He was just contracted to write the second volume, *These Haunted Hallways*, for publication in 2018.

*Spirits of the Cage*, which is due to be published in September 2017, details his investigation of one of England's oldest prisons for witches, as well as the personal experiences of the last owner, who was driven out by the violent nature of the paranormal activity she experienced there.

I recently spoke with Richard about his currently released book, *The World's Most Haunted Hospitals*.

* * * * *

**Q: In your books you explore the paranormal, specifically hauntings. What inspired you to write about this?**

**Richard:** I've been fascinated by ghosts and hauntings since I was a young lad. I used to haunt the shelves of my local library (pun very much intended) and devour the works of the great writers and paranormal investigators, people such as Peter Underwood and Harry Price. That led to investigating in the field and trying to gather evidence for myself, which I began doing in the mid-90s. I'm still going strong.

**Richard Estep cofounded Boulder County Paranormal Research Society 2005. He has been investigating claims of the paranormal for two decades in both the United Kingdom and the United States.**

**Q: Are you a paranormal investigator?**

**Richard:** I'm the founder of the Boulder County Paranormal Research Society, which covers the front range of Colorado, but I also manage to get further afield.

In the last 12 months I've investigated the haunted home of a deceased serial killer in Indianapolis, a prison for witches and the notorious Black Monk House in England, a haunted hospital in Utah, and the botanic gardens in Denver, beneath which hundreds of bodies still lie buried.

**Q: Do you believe in the supernatural?**

**Richard:** There's no such thing as the supernatural. We simply don't have an adequate definition of "natural" yet. I consider myself to be healthily skeptical, which is inevitable considering that 90% or more of the things that I'm called in to investigate turn out to have a perfectly rational explanation.

**Q: Have you ever had a personal paranormal experience?**

**Richard:** Several. Something seemed to accompany me home in 2014, when a shadowy figure was seen around our home. Electrical equipment began to act strangely, and a woman's voice was heard several times in the house.

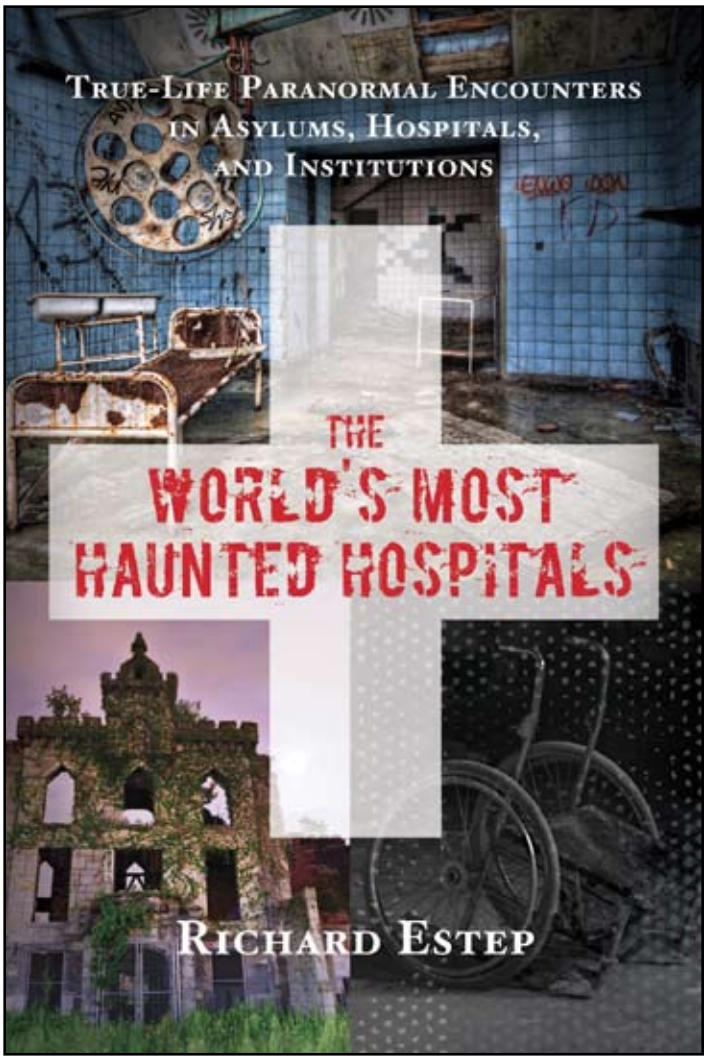
Thankfully, even though I'm an agnostic, I have a friend on speed dial who is a Catholic priest. After he performed a ritual at the house, everything settled down again.

> "There's no such thing as the supernatural. We simply don't have an adequate definition of 'natural' yet."

**Q: Why do you think readers, and society in general, are fascinated by the paranormal?**

**Richard:** Who isn't interested in the age-old question of what happens to us when we die? In this 21st Century era of glass and steel buildings and near-instantaneous digital communications, can it really be possible that we are surrounded by the spirits of those who have walked the earth before us?

We all have a deeply vested interest in what happens to us after our physical bodies give out. At the end of the day, of course, we'll all find out for ourselves ... but wouldn't it be good to know beforehand?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THE WORLD'S MOST HAUNTED HOSPITALS
Richard Estep

***The World's Most Haunted Hospitals*** **recounts some of the most fascinating and chilling stories of hospital hauntings from across the globe.**

**Q: In *The World's Most Haunted Hospitals,* you focus on haunted hospitals. Why did you choose to write about haunted hospitals?**

**Richard:** I make my living as a paramedic, so it only seemed natural for me to write about hospitals and the ghosts that inhabit them. We've all been to hospitals, and many people find them unnerving even at the best of times, but I feel perfectly at home there.

**Q: Why are so many hospitals haunted?**

**Richard:** All the drama of human life is played out upon that particular stage: birth, death, and everything in between. Triumph and tragedy, laughter, and tears, all of it taking place in a relatively small enclosed space for years, if not decades.

→

**Richard's published works documenting paranormal activity include *The Haunting of Asylum 49, In Search of the Paranormal, Haunted Longmont,* and *Spirits of the Cage: True Accounts of Living in a Haunted Medieval Prison.***

How could all of that emotion, both positive and negative, fail to leave a mark of some kind?

**Q: What is the most haunted location you've ever been in?**

**Richard:** Currently, I would go with the old Tooele Valley Hospital in Utah, now known as Asylum 49. It seems to have the full spectrum of paranormal activity, particularly if you visit in the weeks around Halloween.

**Q: Tell us about your most recent/current investigation.**

**Richard:** I'm working on a book about the infamous Black Monk House (30 East Drive in Pontefract in England) along with coauthor Bil Bungay; a book about the haunting of Denver's Cheesman Park and Botanic Gardens; a second volume of my paranormal research autobiography, currently titled *These Haunted Hallways*; and lastly a book about the haunting of Fox Hollow Farm in Indianapolis along with coauthor Rob Graves. These are all active and ongoing investigations.

**Q: Were there any haunted hospitals you've visited that didn't make it into the book?**

**Richard:** A certain sanatorium in the American south, mainly because the owner was happy to rent it out to us but refused permission to mention it by name. A shame, because it was a beautiful location and one that I very much enjoyed investigating.

**Q: What is the oldest/longest-running haunting that you uncovered for the book?**

**Richard:** I cover some of the historic London hospitals, which have been serving the citizens of that great city for well over a hundred years (and in some cases much longer).

Those stories are handed down from employee to employee over the generations, primarily by word of mouth.

**Q: As a paramedic, have you ever encountered a haunted ambulance?**

**Richard:** I've heard rumors, but as EMTs and paramedics are notorious for their off-color senses of humor, I've yet to find a credible one. Remember, nobody ever dies in an ambulance.

**Q: How many medical professionals shared their experiences with you for the book?**

**Richard:** I'm a little too lazy to look up the exact number, but I talked with a great many. Doctors and nurses from several countries were willing to talk to me, sometimes off the record (a belief in ghosts and hauntings can sometimes be detrimental to one's professional reputation), and it was surprising to me how even the most avowed skeptics all seemed to have at least one story that involved something they couldn't explain.

**Q: Ten percent of your profits from *The World's Most Haunted Hospitals* is being donated to the St. Baldrick's Foundation. Tell us a little about that charity.**

**Richard:** This wonderful charity is leading the charge against pediatric cancer, funding research studies, treatment, and support options for that horrible disease.

Every year, hundreds of people shave their heads to support the St. Baldrick's Foundation, and I will donate 10% of my royalty check for *The World's Most Haunted Hospitals*, giving it to them as a small measure of my appreciation for the great work they do. Thank you in advance to everybody who buys a copy and helps support this great cause.

> "I PLAN TO COLLECT GHOSTLORE FROM AROUND THE WORLD AND HELP PRESERVE SOME OF THE FASCINATING STORIES THAT ARE ATTACHED TO SOME OF THOSE HISTORIC OLD PLACES."

**Q: What does the future hold for your writing?**

**Richard:** I hope to continue to travel the world visiting haunted locations, investigating them, and writing about my findings. I also plan to collect ghostlore from around the world and help preserve some of the fascinating stories that are attached to some of those historic old places.

When I'm not doing that, I also write supernaturally themed fiction under my own name and horror fiction under a pen name.

* * * * *

*To learn more about* Richard Estep and his work visit www.richardestep.net, and to learn more about Boulder County Paranormal Research Society, visit https://www.bouldercountyparanormal.org/.◆

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# JESS' DREAM

Excerpt from 'Planet Jesus Trilogy' by Douglas Brode and Shaun L. Brode

*The following excerpt from 'Planet Jesus Trilogy: Book One: Flesh and Blood' by Douglas Brode and Shaun L. Brode is republished with permission. Copyright © 2017.*

As the novel opens, Jess is an eleven-year-old girl living with her family in Galilee 2,000+ years ago. Seemingly normal though hardly average, she has always felt different from all others around her. Despite the simplicity of Jess' lifestyle as the daughter of humble stone mason and sometimes carpenter Joseph, sudden flashes within her mind suggest that Jess was born for a specific and important purpose.

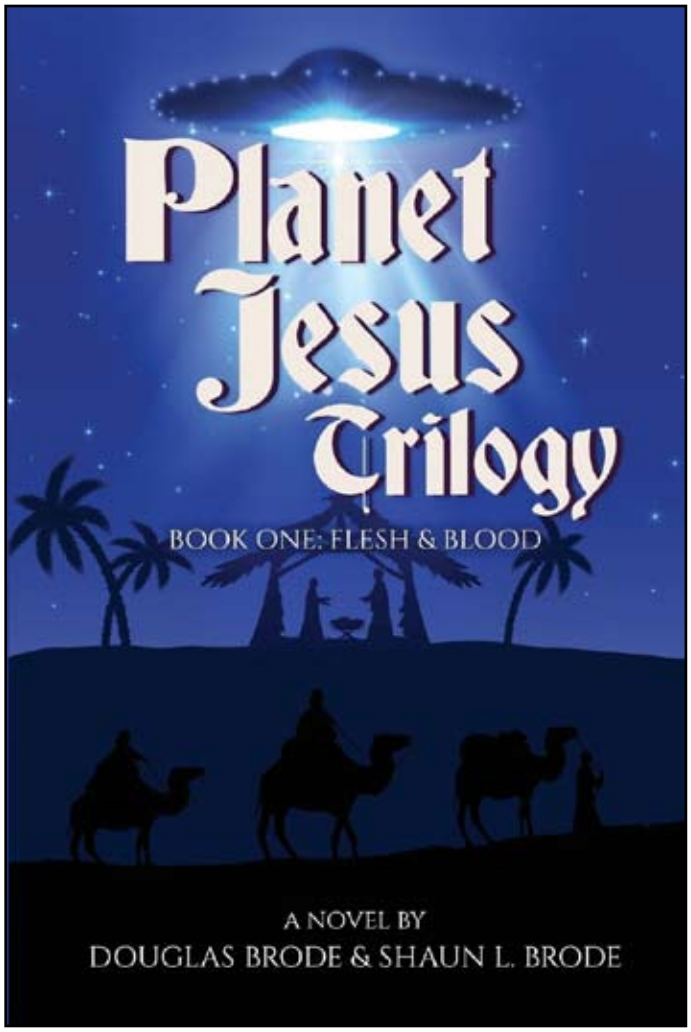
Then, one autumn evening, she curls up on her sleeping mat ...

* * * * *

Partly awake still, I find myself in a disorienting transition between a restless state of surrendering to sleep and pure phantasmagoria. Ahead lies a stark terrain stretching far and wide: flat, barren, seemingly infinite. My eyes veer to the left, then to the right. On either side are vast mountains, their peaks tickling the white clouds in a clear, powder-blue sky. All this occurs in a split second, more swiftly than I can recall it now in words, as I completely succumb to deep sleep.

Gradually, I become aware that my body is shaking back and forth as I stand on some solid object in motion. A glance downward reveals a thick slab of wood, welded by metal bolts to an open-air vehicle. I hold leather reins tightly in my hands. I'm aware enough of my fantastic surroundings to realize I'm riding on a chariot of the type Egyptians and Greeks favor.

But this one is unique. For other than the wood




**"Planet Jesus Trilogy was inspired, at least in part, by what has come to be called Ancient Alien Theory. Once derided as a pseudo-science, many of its precepts are now taken seriously by legitimate thinkers, professors, etc."**

upon which I balance myself, all else has been fashioned from pure gold. Momentarily, my eyes are blinded by the sun. Blinking, I see that it hangs precariously low on the horizon, a bright, orange ball drifting down from its daily perch. Helios comes near to Earth, scorching the land below. What did Yahweh once promise? "The fire next time ..."

I know, too, though I can't grasp how or why, all that is happening around me exists for one purpose: to beckon me onward. So I slap the reins. The horses gain even more speed. There are four, all majestic. Each white, manes fluttering wildly.

I become aware of a terrible pounding on either side. With difficulty, I balance myself, sneaking brief sideways glances. Shock sets in. A quartet of beasts pursue me. Horrible things, vaguely resembling creatures that exist on Earth, though oversized, distorted, and terrifying. To my left, a lion and a bear lunge close. The lion isn't one that might wander deep in the wilderness, for on its back enormous eagle wings spread wide. Next to this creature, the bear leans awkwardly to one side, biting down on three sharp bones held tight within its immense teeth.

They gain on me, pushing closer. Their mouths hang open; spittle pours out. They cast menacing eyes over and up at me. I can do nothing but scream, "Haaaaah!" and slap the reins again, harder, in hopes my horses will run faster. Then, I dare peek to my right: two other monstrosities, likewise resembling worldly animals but with twisted features. A leopard, plodding ahead on immense paws, is crowned by four identical heads, each with fangs stretching downward from wide-open mouths. Its eight eyes, red and glowing like splints of wood in a brazier, leave little doubt it plans to devour me. Beside it races the most remarkable creature of all: a hairy thing I can't identify.

## PLANET JESUS: Where 'The New Testament' meets 'Close Encounters.'

The body is corpulent, its fur-covered legs seemingly too short and squat to support such immense weight. What sets this lumbering beast apart from the others are its spiraling horns. Three rise from a flat, dark forehead, four more from the top of its crown, for a total of seven.

Often I've come in contact with horned animals. But their antlers had not prepared me for these. The color? Ivory, similar to the tusks of elephants. Circling, they extend upward, as if fashioned by a craftsman to appear at once horrifying and beautiful.

All four beasts gain on us, pushing closer. This may be the day that I die! Unable to imagine how to save myself, I panic, close my eyes, and brace for whatever

→

happens. Nothing! Do I dare look again? Rather than overwhelm me, the pursuers have inexplicably replaced the horses and now pull the chariot. Were they dangerous only in my perception? Could these actually be allies if considered from another angle of vision? For, apparently, they only wish to hurry me along. Any sense of threat swiftly dissolves, though the chariot's golden surface transforms into flames that flicker outward and upward.

Finally, I spot our destination far away: a grand tower, reaching so high its cap of gold appears, from my perspective, to touch the bottom curve of the sun. Everything must be interconnected. But how? And why? That's when I realize I am no longer me. At least, not as before.

My paltry, linen tunic, identical to those that other provincial Hebrew girls wear in Israel's northern hill country, has given way to polished bronze armor. Stranger still, my body — chest encased in a breastplate, feet covered by black leather boots, a helmet atop my head — has become that of a boy. I accept this sea change, grasping that it has occurred for some reason I do not yet understand but eventually will. All in good time. And place! Remember: always, time and place together.

Abruptly, we arrive at the tower's gate. As if anticipating us, the great wooden doors swing open. The beasts rush inside, pulling the chariot. And myself, frozen in place with fear. As we enter, throngs of people rush out of our way, sensing the authority of this unknown entity that invades their inner sanctum, the heart and soul of their city.

Somehow, the beasts manage to halt before crashing into a looming object just ahead. Here stands a throne, bedecked in jewels. Flowers of all colors have been strewn across its enormous seat. I know that it awaits me ... has existed here, on this stretch of desert, in its clandestine tower, anticipating my arrival for an immeasurable period of time. Perhaps for all eternity. On it perches a young woman. Her face is the color of clay, her hair dark and long. The pupils of her eyes resemble a pair of black olives. She wears a white pagan gown and matching sandals to shield her small feet from sun and sand. I know that wisdom as well as beauty are here personified. I have no idea if she offers friendship or destruction. Nor do I believe it matters much.

The point is, she awaits. Me, and only me.

"Wake up. You were lost in a dream. Was it a nightmare?"

With effort, I open my eyes. My older half-brother James kneels beside me. His sensitive brow reveals concern as, leaning over my prone body, James considers his trembling half-sister.

"I'm not certain." I allow my eyelids, eager to know whether the dream might return, to close again. "Awful and wonderful, actually."

I managed to retain the memory of what, as best as I could recall, were the dream's outstanding elements. The chariot and beasts. The lowered sun. The tower stretching upward. The throne. And the beautiful girl! Her skin like brown velvet and deep, dark eyes with black pupils that resembled olives. Eyes that had locked upon me, or that male variation of me, which sprang into being within the dream. She, the conclusion of the dream. Its epicenter as well. A key, perhaps, that might unlock the meaning of everything else contained therein.

I wondered how long it would be before my experiences in the world would allow me to decode the identity of each elusive element, as my ancestor Joseph had the dreams of an Egyptian pharaoh, whom the young Hebrew long ago served. More important still, my dream's personal relevance to me and my future. I could not have known, or guessed, that this process would commence before the day was done.

Fittingly, if in an odd way, it would begin where the dream had ended: With the girl ...

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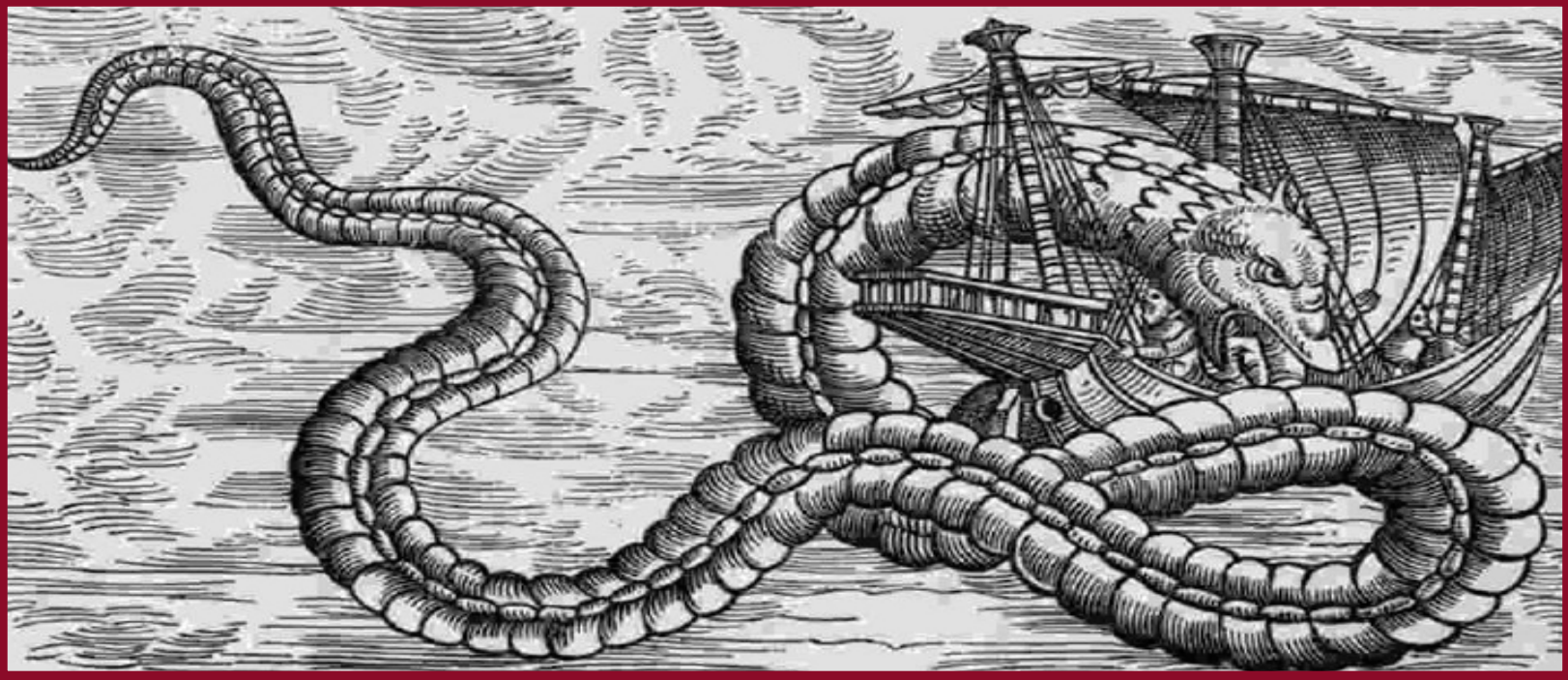
*To learn more about "Planet Jesus Trilogy: Book One: Flesh and Blood" by Douglas Brode and Shaun L. Brode, visit http://www.planetjesustrilogy.com/.* ◆



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